

Review and Expositor

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Editorial Introduction

The first three articles, dealing with Hosea, were contributed by members of the faculty of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Professors Owens and Rust are well known to our readers through previous contributions. This is the first article to appear in the *Review and Expositor* by Dr. Hall. After the completion of his theological education in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and several years of teaching in Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, Dr. Hall came to his present post as assistant professor of Old Testament Interpretation in 1956. Aside from the general interest in the Book of Hosea, these articles are published with the exception that they will be of considerable help to teachers in the annual Bible Study Week in the Southern Baptist Convention. Hosea is the book to be studied in January 1958.

The article by Professor Wamble carries forward the story of the beginnings of Baptist life in seventeenth century England which was begun in the July issue. The two articles are concerned with an important part of Baptist history. The interpretations presented here cannot be expected to be met with universal agreement but they are well documented and are based upon both extensive and intensive research into the materials of the period. They should be welcomed, therefore, as contributions to Baptists that we may better understand who we are and from whence we came.

Dr. Scherer's article is the substance of the final lecture on preaching which he gave in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in March 1956 on the Mullins Foundation. Dr. Scherer is professor of homilectics in Union Seminary in New York City. The printed word alone can never convey all that is contained in a sermon. Although this article was called a lecture, those who heard it were aware that a sermon in the fullness of its meaning was delivered to them. We were aware that God had chosen preaching as a means of relating persons to himself. It is hoped that something of this same experience may be had by the readers of this article.

The article on the World Council of Churches is the attempt by an illustrious Baptist, world renowned scholar, and beloved missionary statesman to interpret for fellow Baptists one of the most significant movements within contemporary Christian life. Dr. Latourette is Professor of Missions and Oriental History, Emeritus, in Yale University, where before his retirement he was also Director of Graduate Studies in Religion.

The last article is Guy H. Ranson's inaugural lecture as associate professor of Christian ethics in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The lecture was delivered September 17, 1957 in Alumni Chapel.

Introduction to Hosea

BY THOMAS O. HALL, JR.

The Book of Hosea is the longest of the Minor Prophets. Probably for this reason it stands at the first of the Twelve. However, some scholars refer to the possibility that its place results from a theory that chronologically Hosea was first.¹

Hosea was from the kingdom of Israel and according to the super-scription (1:1) preached during the reign of Jeroboam, son of Joash, King of Israel, and the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Though the reference to the kings of Judah probably represents the work of a later judistic editor, Hosea doubtless did preach during the reigns of Jeroboam II (789-748 B. C.) and some of his successors who followed him to the throne in Israel. From the name of Hosea's first child and its interpretation² it is certain that the reign of Jeroboam II had not yet come to an end. However, it is doubtful that Hosea preached later than 733 or 732³ because he still refers to Gilead as Israelite territory which the Assyrians took in 733 B. C. There is no internal evidence in the Book of Hosea that during his ministry Israel had broken with her previous ally Assyria. Neither does the book show any reference to the Syro-Ephriamite war in which Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Damascus joined forces in an expedition against King Ahab of Judah (734 B. C.). Thus, Hosea was probably a contemporary for a time with Amos from Tekoa, who also preached in Israel at Bethel and Samaria during the reign of Jeroboam II. So dissimilar are the recorded messages of these two prophets that it is unlikely that they were personally acquainted or that either possessed a detailed knowledge of

1. W. O. E. Oesterley and Theodore H. Robinson, *An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament* (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), p. 345.

2. "And the Lord said to him, 'Call his name Jezreel: for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. And on that day, I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.'" Hosea 1:4, 5 (RSV). This predicted end of the dynasty of Jehu did not occur until the assassination of Zechariah, the son and successor of Jeroboam II at Ibleam in 748 B. C.

3. Aage Bentzen, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gads Forlag, 1949), II, p. 130. Bentzen assumes on the basis of 11:11 that Hosea was still active in 721 B. C. after the fall of Samaria.

the work of the other. It has been fashionable, however, for some to speculate that Hosea might have heard the call of God through the impact of the fiery desert prophet from the South.

Of Hosea's personal background very little is actually known. The name Hosea, "salvation," seems to have been a fairly common one in Israel. This is the same as Joshua or Jesus and was also the name of the last ruler of the Northern Kingdom. We are told that his father's name was Beeri, "my well," but there is no evidence that this is the Beerah, a Reubenite prince, who is mentioned in I Chron. 5:6.⁴ Though Hosea's birthplace is not mentioned in any extant biblical literature, a site in southern Gilead is to this day called Hosea's Mountain. There is a possibility that a tradition has preserved for us information not afforded by the Bible. Further, Hosea's reference (10:14) to Shalman's destruction of the north Gileadite city, Beth-arbel, might tend to substantiate the theory that Hosea came originally from a locality east of the Jordan.⁵ Opinions concerning his profession must fall into the category of speculation, but some have confidently concluded that he was a priest because of his many attacks upon the shortcomings of the priesthood.⁶ There seems to be no more evidence that he was better acquainted with the priesthood than he was with royalty. Neither is it wise to conclude that he came from the country simply because he refers frequently to agricultural activities. It is safe to conclude that in this early period even city dwellers were not far removed from the soil. Neither is his fate known for sure though there is a tradition which says that he died of martyrdom on the east side of the Jordan. There it is claimed that his grave may still be seen.⁷

Though there is doubt about many of these things which are well-known concerning the other prophets, the most intimate picture of his own family life is possessed. He was married to a certain Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, who

4. John Mauchline and Harold Cooke Phillips, "The Book of Hosea," George Arthur Buttrick and others, editors. *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), VI, p. 533.

5. Emil G. Kraeling, *Rand McNally Bible Atlas* (New York: Rand McNally and Company, 1956), p. 293.

6. Bentzen, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

7. Kraeling, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

bore him two sons named Jezreel and Lo-Ammi, and a daughter, Lo-Ruhamah. Each of these children bore names symbolic of Yahweh's relationship with his people Israel (1:2-8). Heated debate has raged around the character of Gomer. The Lord said to Hosea, "Go take to yourself a wife of harlotry for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord. (1:2)." Some of the main interpretations are:

1. God commanded Hosea to marry a woman who was literally a harlot. This view has many variations including the contention that she had already borne illegitimate children and later proved unfaithful to the prophet.⁸ This view rests heavily on the fact that only of Jezreel is it said Gomer bore the child to him (1:3). Further reputed proof is that the third child was named Lo-Ammi, "not my people." This is interpreted to mean the newborn child was no more Hosea's than wayward Israel was any more God's people. Others have claimed Gomer was a temple prostitute. The difficulty in understanding how God would command a prophet to do something so morally abhorrent is the most telling objection to this view in all its variations. Also, to interpret this literally destroys the parallel relationship between Hosea and Gomer on one hand and God and Israel on the other. The implication in Hosea is that in the beginning Israel was God's pure bride and only after the establishment of the covenant relationship did Israel become enamored by paramours.

Another objection is that Gomer is described (1:2), not by the usual word for harlot, but by the term "woman of harlotries," which should be interpreted to mean she had only an inclination to harlotry. Judging from the low moral standard resulting from the widespread worship of fertility gods, it is easy to see how any woman of the land might well have had an inclination in this direction.

2. It has been widely held that no such union occurred but that the story of Hosea's marriage should be understood allegorically or perhaps parabolically. Those who hold to this view generally make much of the fact that allegory, parable and such are often used as literary devices in biblical

8. This was the view held by most of the Latin and Greek Church Fathers. See George Adam Smith, "The Book of the Twelve Prophets," W. Robertson Nicoll, editor, *The Expositor's Bible* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1943) IV, pp. 500-501.

literature and that prophets are sometimes presented as performing symbolic deeds which they could not literally have performed (Jer. 13; Ezek. 4.).⁹ Several weighty objections seriously militate against either a parabolic or an allegorical view. If this story is either, it seems natural that some symbolic significance of Gomer's name could be easily discovered. Especially is this true since Hosea's children bore names symbolic of God's relationship to Israel. It must be admitted that attempts have been made to discover such a symbolic meaning, but the very fact that there are so many differences of opinion only serves to increase suspicion that the meaning of her name has no special significance either in interpreting the Book or God's relationship with his people.¹⁰

Another objection to this view is that it does not completely do away with the moral problem involved. If Gomer were his wife, and there is no evidence otherwise, it certainly seems out of character for God's spokesman to create such a story about her.

In the third place this view implies that Hosea first came to understand God's love for Israel, who at one time was a pure bride but became an adulteress, then he invented or used a story to illustrate this relationship. But this is contrary to what seems to be plainly said in Hosea 1:2. There it is stated that in or through his domestic experience God first spoke to him. Then because of his own heart-break for the wayward Gomer, he began to see God's persistent love for the wayward people Israel. Further, the pathos and the vividness of this story would lead one to believe that in some sense it must have been a personal experience for the prophet. In addition, the literary form is that of a simple narrative rather than a parable. Certainly its form is not an involved allegory.

3. A few claim that the woman in chapter three is not the same as Gomer. Here again, as in all of these views, there are varying shades of opinion. Some claim that even

9. Raymond Calkins, *The Modern Message of the Minor Prophets* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 34.

10. In answer to this objection some have conjectured that perhaps Gomer had a significance to Hosea's contemporaries which has been lost to us. Others have asserted, with some plausibility, that the parabolic interpretation neither stands nor falls on the discovery of a symbolic meaning of Gomer's name.

though Gomer was a woman of harlotries, i.e., a woman with inclination to harlotry, she remained faithful to Hosea.¹¹ The woman in chapter three is then another woman, an actual adulteress, whom Hosea purchased, brought to his home and separated from her lovers to show how Yahweh would separate between Israel and her sins. The fatal argument against this position is found in Hosea 3:1. God said to Hosea, "Go again, love a woman who is beloved of a paramour and is an adulteress even as the Lord loves the people of Israel though they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins." (RSV). The RSV rendition of this verse could possibly mean that another woman is involved in chapter three. However, the clause "go again love a woman" could just as logically be translated "keep on loving a woman." For the woman in chapter three to be any other than Gomer would surely destroy the obvious analogy between Hosea and his marital situation and God and sinful Israel. Also there is involved a serious moral objection to the prophet bringing such a woman into his home.

A variation of this view has been held by R. E. Wolfe who claims that though Gomer was unfaithful she was never restored.¹² She met the punishment for adultery. She was stoned to death. He claims that the story in chapter three represents the work of later redactors who freely added this to foster the hope that Israel would finally be redeemed. This view denies to the prophet Hosea the advanced conception that God is long suffering and that his redemptive love will not rest until he has brought Israel into harmony with himself.

4. The most tenable view is that Gomer was faithful at the time of the marriage but had within her the spirit of harlotry. Her potentially unchaste nature did not reveal itself until after the marriage, but when it did become evident, Hosea was able to see that this had been in her character all along. This inclination to harlotry could easily have developed from her idolatrous environment and thus possibly she was already a spiritual adulteress. After her marriage her spiritual adultery led to physical adultery, her

11. Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1948), pp. 568-569.

12. Roll and Emerson Wolfe, *Meet Amos and Hosea* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), pp. 81-87.

alienation from Hosea, and the desertion of her children. Then after an undefined lapse of time Hosea sacrificially redeemed her from slavery and restored her to his home. This interpretation obviously eliminates the moral problem connected with most of the above theories. It also preserves the simple biblical narrative without resorting to emendations of the text or unnatural interpretations. At the same time it preserves the analogy of the relationship between Hosea and Gomer with that of Yahweh and Israel.

This introduction to Hosea would be incomplete without at least a cursory reference to the historical background. Morally, spiritually and religiously the same conditions that were condemned by the prophet Amos continued to prevail, with the possible exception that there had been a gradual worsening in all these areas.¹³ In bold, vivid, and strikingly frank language Hosea upbraided his contemporaries for their moral degradation. All around the prophet were the symptoms of moral decay. Homelife was destroyed by immorality and the foundations of society were weakened by swearing, lying, murder, stealing, greed and lust (4:2). The crown was often in sympathy with evil; judges were venal; and the royal court was drunken and profligate. To him, indifferent and corrupt religious and political leaders were a major contributing factor in the moral breakdown of the nation (4:6, 9; 5:1, 10; 7:3). Housebreaking was common and roving bands of bandits pillaged the land (6:9; 7:1). Hosea accused the priests of divorcing morality from religion; indeed, he accused them of feeding on the sin of their people (4:8). Well has George Adam Smith claimed that they lived upon the vice of the day and possessed a vested interest in the crimes of their society.¹⁴

In matters of religion, Israel of Hosea's day had surrendered to her cultural milieu and worshipped the Baalim, i.e., the various Canaanite gods of the land.) To these gods Israel gave credit for the agricultural productivity of her soil, and rites and ceremonies were observed to insure the good will of these fertility deities (2:5; 4:12; 13; 7:14; 9:12). In so doing Israel did the same thing Gomer had done when she turned her back upon her husband and became an

13. Especially is this reflected in chapters 4-13.

14. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 506.

adulteress. The religious confusion in the land was accentuated by the fact that there had been a fusion of Yahwehism with Baalism. Thus the worship on the high places which some of the people thought would be pleasing to Yahweh was only an abomination and was described by Hosea as occasion for sinning (5:6; 6:6 ff.). Not only did Hosea inveigh against the worship of the Canaanite fertility gods but he also uncompromisingly condemned images as the work of men's hands and thus powerless to assist their makers or worshippers (8:5, 6; 10:6; 13:2).

Internal political conditions were also in decay. Reference has already been made to the fact that Hosea's ministry began during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II (789-748 B. C.). It was under his leadership that the Kingdom of Israel reached its widest geographic extent. II Kings 14: 25, 28 relates how he "restored" the boundary of Israel from Hamath to the sea of the Arabah; i.e., the Dead Sea, and also gained portions of Damascus and Hamath which had formerly belonged to the Southern Kingdom or Judah. With the death of Jeroboam II this brilliant but short-lived period of Israelite prosperity came to an abrupt end. The next several decades were characterized by internal intrigue and frequent revolution. The virile dynasty of Jehu came to an ignoble end with the assassination of Jeroboam's son and successor, Zechariah, who was able to reign for only six months. Shallim, the assassin, was destined to reign for only one month, after which he was assassinated by one of his own military leaders, Menahem (748-736 B. C.). It was during Menahem's reign that Israel became an Assyrian vassal and unequal ally. Tiglath-Pileser III, the Pul of II Kings 15:19, usurped the throne of Assyria and began to enlarge the Assyrian empire. When he moved his forces into the West, Menahem accepted Assyrian vassalage and agreed to pay an indemnity of one hundred talents of silver.

Menahem's son, Pekahiah, was able to reign only two years and was assassinated by one of his captains (Pekah) who "conspired against him and smote him in Samaria." It was this Pekah who joined forces with the Syrians in war against Ahaz of Judah. In response to an urgent request from Ahaz, Tiglath-Pileser III warred against this alliance. In the struggle Damascus was taken and Israel lost the trans-

jordanic and northern portions of her kingdom. Pekah, in turn, was succeeded by the last king of Israel, Hoshea, who precipitated a revolt which culminated in the fall of Samaria (721 B. C.), the destruction of the body politic, and the general deportation of the survivors.¹⁵

During the chaotic period following the death of Jero-boam II when frequent dynastic changes must have greatly confused the people, the situation was further complicated and the political decline hastened by constant strife and intrigue between the pro-Egyptian and pro-Assyrian parties. Though the leadership in Israel, in appreciation of the precarious position of a small nation perched between two great world powers, thought it good policy to make an alliance with one or the other, such a course was looked upon by Hosea as an indication of lack of trust in Yahweh and a severance of the bonds of the covenant. To the prophet, such a policy could only bring further frustration, chaos and final destruction (5:13; 7:8; 9; 8:9; 10; 12:1).

The Book of Hosea falls rather naturally into two unequal divisions, chapters 1-3 and chapters 4-14. The first section is autobiographical while the latter section is composed primarily of his prophecies. It is impossible to determine if these two sections have always circulated together. It is highly improbable that any of this material was actually recorded by Hosea himself but his words and what is known of him have been preserved through the activity of his disciples. Being almost impossible to outline logically, chapters 4-14 have been the occasion of much difficulty. Calkins is correct in maintaining that in this section "we have a multitude of variations of one theme: Israel's apostasy and punishment."¹⁶ The text of Hosea, especially chapters 4-14, is one of the most difficult in all the Old Testament. There are many places where the existing manuscripts offer little help in restoring the original text. Even the Septuagint, which is often invaluable in discovering readings nearer to the original, seems to follow a text which was not substantially different from the Masoretic text.

15. It has already been noted that according to the extant prophecies Hosea's ministry can hardly have extended beyond 733 B. C.

16. Calkins, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

The difficulties in discovering a logical outline for chapters 4-14, coupled with the undeniably corrupt text, have caused many to resort to wholesale textual emendations, some of which are seemingly absurd. These two factors have also caused many seriously to question the unity of the material. It must be admitted that the text does show some evidence of editorial revision and additions, such as the editor who made certain interpolations for the benefit of Judean readers (1:1a, 7). However, it seems unnecessary to go to such extremes as R. E. Wolfe who finds traces of the editorial work of what he calls "early scribes, the later scribes, the anti-idol polemist, the anti-high-place editor, the later exilic editor (who introduced sections expressive of hope and redemption), and the eschatologists."¹⁷ If Wolfe's approach is followed one must greatly reduce the amount of genuine Hoseanic material found in the Book of Hosea.¹⁸

17. Mauchline and Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 554.

18. Wolfe, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-156.

The Theology of Hosea

BY ERIC C. RUST

It is my purpose in this essay to discuss the theological point of view which pervades the work of Hosea.¹ It has increasingly been recognized how important is the category "covenant" in the understanding of the biblical revelation. It is, indeed, one of the unifying concepts which runs throughout the testimony of Holy Scripture, and, although we should beware of making it the sole key to interpretation, it does, along with other concepts, play an important role in the witness of the biblical revelation and in the understanding of God's mighty acts which are consummated in the coming of Christ. Hosea along with Amos is the first of the great literary prophets, and many of the notes that he sounded recur in the messages of those who follow him. Furthermore, he stands in a succession which looks back to the deliverance from Egypt. It is therefore not surprising that the covenant idea is the focal point of his message. For him God is the covenant-God and Israel is the covenant-people, so that the vicissitudes of Israel's history and its contemporary situation must be understood in terms of that covenant by which it is related to the living God. The judgment and mercy of God, the sin and rebellion of Israel, are alike seen within the aegis of such a relation, and our understanding of the prophet will be sought on this basis.

The Covenant In History And Experience

The God who came to Hosea in the intimate experiences of his own married life was also the living God who in and through the vicissitudes of history had dealt with his chosen people. While God undoubtedly spoke to Hosea through the tragedy of his own home, this revelation is set within the wider framework of the nation's faith and its significance is seen in the wider setting of Israel's relation to Yahweh. It is not my purpose to discuss in this essay the various views

1. I have made but few quotations in this essay, but I am greatly indebted to H. W. Robinson, *The Cross of Hosea* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1949), N. H. Snaith, *Mercy and Sacrifice* (London: SCM Press, 1953), J. Mauchline, *Exegesis of Hosea* in vol. VI of *The Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), and S. L. Brown, *The Book of Hosea* (London: Methuen, 1932).

of the relationship between chapter 1 and chapter 3. Let it suffice to state that the best solution appears to be that which makes chapter 3 the sequel to chapter 1, recognizing that chapter 1 was written after the marriage break-up, so that the initial marriage to Gomer was seen within the purpose and foreknowledge of God and thus in the light of subsequent events and of Gomer's infidelity. This explains why 1:2 implies that Hosea knew that he was marrying a harlot. Seen after the event and within the purpose of God, Hosea can spell out the purpose of God in his marriage. As H. W. Robinson puts it, "... when the prophet did interpret his own life prophetically in the light of after events as being under the providential guidance of God, he saw that he had, in fact, though unconsciously at the time, taken to himself a woman *destined* to be a wife of harlotry and to bear children of harlotry."² Accepting this approach to the biographical details offered in the prophecy, it seems clear that the call of the prophet and his understanding of God's nature and purpose came to him through his own marital experience. Through the crisis of his own life-situation the prophet came into encounter with the living God and entered into that *pathos* with the divine which characterizes the prophetic consciousness. But this insight into the mind and will of God must be seen within the setting of that wider faith which Hosea shared with the people of God and which was grounded in the great historic act of deliverance. The God who came to him was Yahweh, the God of Israel, and, within the matrix of Hosea's own experience, was born a vision of the travail of Yahweh with his covenant people.

Two matters need to be elaborated at this point. The first is the Hebrew understanding of marriage. In Hebrew thought generally, as J. Pedersen has made very evident,³ a guiding concept is that of wholeness. The image of God in Genesis 1:26 is specifically indicated as male and female, and the marriage bond was regarded as the making of the two into one whole. This psychic whole created by marriage belonged to the same order as the psychic whole which resulted from the covenant bond, such as that between Jonathan and David. Hence it was a natural movement in

2. Robinson, *op. cit.*

3. *Israel* (London: Oxford U. Press, 1926, 1940), I-11, III-IV, *passim*.

the Hebrew mind to transfer the marriage image to the covenant relationship, to see in married love and loyalty an indication of the *chesed* (covenant love) and *'emunah* (faithfulness) which must characterize the covenant bond. The second matter to bear in mind is the background of Hosea's own time. The naturalistic religion of Canaan into which the Hebrews came at the settlement had, as had the religions of the Ancient Near East generally, a fertility background and was accompanied by rites which, based on sympathetic magic, sought to stimulate the fertility of the land and its people by sexual orgies. These were realized in the functions of the king at the new year festival ceremony who acted as representative of the people and also as the adopted son of the gods. Hence the idea of a marriage between the god, the land and the people was not alien to the thought of the Canaanite world, and, in the time of Hosea, the attempt to baalize or naturalize Yahwism and to reduce Yahweh to the level of a fertility god had reached so far that ideas and practices of this type were associated with the Yahwistic cultus. If, as many believe, Hosea's wife had become a sacred prostitute in this kind of movement, it was all the more remarkable that Hosea should apply the marriage image to the living God and display the spiritual truth contained in the naturalistic perversions to which the marriage image had been subjected by pagan practice.

Within his own marital experience, then, Hosea came into encounter with the living God. It would seem that the faithlessness of Gomer and his own loyal redeeming love for her became the occasion for his call to prophesy and provided the figures for his understanding of the relation of God to Israel. His own love became an indication of the triumphant and redemptive covenant-love of God. His own faithfulness to the marriage covenant became a picture of the faithfulness of Yahweh to his covenant with Israel. So, in chapter 2, the prophet turns from the occasion of his call and its background in his own married life, as recorded in chapter 1, to the burden of his message. The God who has dealt with him in his own heartbreak is the God who brought Israel out of Egypt, and who, because of that gracious act and its accompanying covenant-bond, will not fail his people, however much they fail him. We shall turn to the significance

of the triumph of God's love in the third section of this essay.

Hosea uses certain characteristic concepts which are integral to the biblical revelation as a whole, and his prophecy provides a real insight into this meaning. Deeply wrought into the texture of Israel's life was the idea of a covenant between God and his people. Israel, as a people, was constituted chiefly by a unique religious faith, and in this faith the initiative was declared to be Yahweh's. Israel was elected by God, known of him (Amos), in the sense that it became the special objective of his gracious act and the peculiar instrument of his redemptive purpose. This election was expressed in the call of the patriarchs, but the seal was set upon it by the covenant relationship established on Sinai through the work of the prophet Moses. The idea of 'covenant,' *berith*, was a characteristic one in the Semitic thought-world of the time, and served to describe a relationship of mutual loyalty and obligation between two parties not related by blood ties. At the human level, it served, in a wider realm, to bind two persons together under obligations akin to those of natural kinship. A typical example is that between David and Jonathan. (I Samuel 20:12ff). It describes a community of souls, of such intensity that the souls of the two, their personalities, cleave together, and become one whole. At the human level, the two parties to the covenant mutually lay obligations upon one another, but, in the case of the covenant of God with Israel, the two parties are never regarded as standing on the same footing. It is God who takes the initiative in choosing Israel to be his people, in knowing them. He had found Israel in the wilderness, declares Hosea, and bound them to himself (9:10; 13:4-5). The prophet sees the gracious calling of God behind the deliverance from Egypt (11:1). In the days of its youth, when it came up out of Egypt, Israel had been responsive within the covenant relationship, and Hosea pictures this in the marriage image (2:15). Borrowing it from the experience of his own marriage and daringly employing it despite its pagan usage in the fertility cultus, the prophet uses this image and that of the father-son relationship to describe the covenant relationship of God with Israel, and from this come the New Testament images of the church, the New Israel, as

the Bride of Christ, and of the Christian as one who has "sonship by adoption" through the Lord Jesus. Within the divine election, Israel's part in the covenant relationship is to accept and obey. It cannot bargain with God, for the covenant is the result of his gracious initiative and choice, so that Israel can lay no obligations on Yahweh. Here the only obligations are those which God lays upon himself towards Israel and upon Israel towards himself. Such a covenant makes Israel into God's people, a whole that is his special concern and to which he has freely bound himself in gracious activity.

Thus the idea of the covenant between God and Israel is pregnant with the conception of grace. Covenant is generally the external and legalized framework of which the inner content is *chesed*, covenant-love, a word which is central in the message of Hosea. *Chesed* characterizes the relationship of the parties to the covenant at any level, and it is marked by the quality of steadfastness or faithfulness. This is indicated by the way in which the word is associated in many Old Testament passages with the "faithfulness" and "righteousness" words. Our translation of *chesed*, therefore, as "loving-kindness" is somewhat weak, since the word conveys the sense of enduring and unchanging faithfulness, of unwavering responsibility to obligations undertaken, of loyalty to the covenant. Of such *chesed* on the part of Yahweh, Hosea is quite sure. It has characterized God's treatment of Israel in the treasured memories of past history, and, in his own marital experience, he has discovered a replica of it, however imperfect. The real issue for the prophet is the responsive *chesed* of Israel, its humble covenant-love, its loyalty to the covenant and obedience to the obligations which Yahweh has graciously imposed. It had so responded in the wilderness in the days of its youth (2:15), but now, despite its outward formality of worship, its heart is distant (6:6). "Covenant-love, not sacrifice" was the prophet's challenge to Israel.

We may note that this covenant concept was an all-embracing one. At Shechem the Sinai covenant associated with the prophet Moses (see Hosea 12:13) was extended to all the tribes and made the basis of a verbal amphictyony. In the days of Hezekiah and Jonah it appears to have been

renewed and made the basis of religious reformation, although such renewal must actually have been much more frequent. Within it was set the special covenant with the house of David and the establishment of the Davidic monarchy, out of which grew the Messianic hope. Further, Israel and the prophet himself saw this covenant of God with his people within the wider setting of a covenant with nature, and, as we shall see, the restoration of this covenant is one aspect of the prophet's hope.

The Rebellion of the Covenant People

Just as Gomer had proved faithless to her marriage covenant with Hosea, so Israel, the bride of Yahweh, had proved faithless, too. It had broken the covenant and rebelled against the living God. Amos, Hosea's contemporary, understood sin in a much more external way than Hosea. For him, sin was constituted by the acts which disobeyed Yahweh's commands and created a situation of social injustice. It was much more external negation of the norm set by God's righteousness. But Hosea, with a deep sympathy and understanding born of his own experience, penetrates more deeply into the human heart. He sees, as our Lord later declared, that what is inside a man is the final determinant of his relation to God. His external acts spring from an inner attitude of heart, and it is to this inner attitude that we must finally turn if we would understand the nature of sin. Hence Hosea has a characteristic phrase to describe sin. It is the "spirit of whoredom" (4:12; 5:4). Just as Gomer went wrong because of a spirit of lust and sensual desire, which expressed itself in the external acts of adultery, so Israel had rebelled against the living God because her heart was wrong. She had gone awhoring after strange gods. The fertility deities of Canaan, the baalim, had awakened wrong desires, and the spirit of whoredom had entered into the heart of Israel.

Hosea sees this inner malady manifested at two levels—the religious and the political. In both cases it showed unfaithfulness to Yahweh a rebellion against the covenant bond. At the religious level it resulted in practices which were marked by gross immorality in the cult and on the part of the priests. Hosea indicts the priests with multiplying the sacrifices and making profit out of them and with

making the sanctuaries centers of robbery and murder (6:9). The immorality that accompanied pagan baal worship had been taken up into the worship of Yahweh, and the priests had sunk to the low level of the people instead of being their actual leaders and exemplars (4:13-14). It would appear that the bull, the Canaanite image of the fertility deity, was retained, and idolatry had become rampant (8:4-6; 10:5; 11:2; 13:2). Men kissed and worshiped the calves and had gone awhoring after the baalim. How far this was an attempt to transform the true faith of Israel into a paganized pattern is not clear. It would appear that Yahweh was actually worshiped in this idolatrous way and with these pagan practices, and perhaps the nearest parable to this, in the contemporary scene, is the increasing tendency to paganism and polytheism in Roman Catholicism which yet declares itself to be truly Christian. The God of Israel was represented as the source of the fertility of the soil, not in the lofty sense of the holy, creative, righteous God who had spoken to Moses, but in the language, imagery, and practice of the surrounding paganism. In its worship, therefore, Israel was no longer worshiping the living God, even though its sanctuaries and priests still used his name. They simply transferred the practices of baal worship, with all their accompanying immorality, to Yahweh. It is still true that we may sin like this, and worship, in the name of Christ, one who by the form of our worship and the content of our faith is the direct negation of Christ.

At the political level, Israel's sin was manifested in a desire for foreign alliances rather than a trust in Yahweh as the Lord of history. The prophet describes Israel as a half-baked cake (7:8), and a "silly dove" (7:11), because of this propensity to seek for external aid rather than to abide secure in the covenant with Yahweh. Situated between the two great imperial powers of Egypt and Assyria, a veritable cockpit of the nations, Israel, and Judah too, were liable to set off one power against the other and to flee to one or the other for aid (12:1). Against the aggressive activity of Assyria, it was natural to flee to Egypt for help, and *vice versa*. Political factions appear to have arisen within Israel which favored one imperial power or the other, but the true solution did not lie in such political alliances and

advocated policies; it lay in a penitent return to Israel's God and to the covenant bond.

In the center of this political turmoil we have a failure on the part of the monarchy. Rebellions and intrigues centered in the royal court, and the "burden of king and princes" was a very real one (8:10). The best rendering of this passage would seem to be "they shall cease for a little while from the burden of king and princes." Hosea's attitude towards the monarchy is reflected in the declarations that Israel has set up kings but not Yahweh, and that Yahweh had given them kings in his anger and taken them away in his wrath (8:4; 13:11). Experience had shown Israel's mistake, and Hosea reflects the changing vicissitudes of the northern kingdom as dynasty followed dynasty. However firmly Judah had abode by the Davidic monarchy, Israel had not. As far as the northern kingdom was concerned, the covenant of Yahweh with the House of David had no meaning, and Hosea can declare the judgment of God upon the royal house, both because of their own iniquity (7:5-7; 9:15), and because of the situation in which they are involved (10:7). If the Code of Deuteronomy reflects the traditions of the northern kingdom and may be traced back to Shechem, as many scholars now suggest, we should not be surprised that it reflects the same fundamental attitude (Deut. 28:36).

Yet all these outward manifestations point to the inner infection of heart, the spirit of whoredom, which produces them. Priests and kings, people and rulers do what they do because they are wrong within. Just here the prophet faces the real issue. The external activity covers an internal deficiency. God requires covenant-love and not sacrifice (6:6). Knowledge of God is more significant than an accumulation of burnt offerings, and by the "knowledge of God" the prophet meant that personal awareness of and response to the presence of God which shows itself in loyalty to the covenant, in unflinching love and obedience, and thus in right relationship to fellow Israelites. Without this, Israel may offer whole flocks and herds as sacrifices, and yet they will not avail (5:6). Indeed God has withdrawn himself from them, and his judgment on them is sure. They have transgressed his covenant and rebelled against his demands, they

have dealt treacherously with Yahweh, and, when the day of rebuke comes, Israel shall be crushed in judgment and become a desolation (5:11). The only hope lies in a turning back to God, in repentance. Twice the prophet drives home his evangelical appeal (6:1-3; 14:1-14). But, at the same time, he discloses that Israel's is a sickness beyond her own cure, an infirmity of will which Israel cannot put right. One of the most terrible effects of sin is the bondage of will which it produces in the sinner. The more a man sins, the more infirm does his will become. John Greenleaf Whittier saw this when he wrote

Forever around the Mercy-Seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit-bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?

What if thine eyes refuse to see,
Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail,
And thou a willing captive be,
Thyself thy own dark jail?⁴

So the prophet sees the impossibility of return. Long disloyalty to the covenant has resulted in the loss of any desire to return, of any sense of need. Israel's doings will not suffer them to return unto God, for the spirit of whoredom is in them (5:4), and the spirit of whoredom means infirmity of will. Even when Israel goes with its flocks and herds to sacrifice to Yahweh, it will not find him (5:6). God has withdrawn himself. Whoredom and wine have deprived Israel, indeed, of the power of volition; they have taken away its heart, which is the center of volitional activity (4:11). Israel has become as abominable as that which it loves (9:10). Hence, if it repents, Israel's repentance is but a shallow thing, like the dew that goes early away (6:4-6). Its response to God is as transient as the morning cloud. It is not genuine, but a superficial formality, a movement which has its ground in purely selfish concern. In 9:12-13 the prophet proclaims the inevitable nemesis that awaits all sin, the fact that sin begets its own harvest and brings down its own doom. There is a moral deterioration, a spiritual dry rot, which sin produces and from which the sinner cannot escape. Israel is beset about by its rebellion

4. "The Answer" in *Selected Poems of John Greenleaf Whittier*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), pp. 415 ff.

and cannot escape (6:19; 7:12). It is unable truly to repent and thus undeserving of the divine mercy.

Is there, then, any hope? To this we must turn in the next section, but we must note two things before we do this. The first is that Hosea, like Amos and Isaiah, is concerned with the northern kingdom as a corporate whole rather than with individual Israelites apart from that whole. It is Israel as a whole that must repent, and the judgment and salvation are alike corporate. Hence, in the second place, Hosea is as drastic in his declaration of judgment as his contemporary Amos. The note of retribution is struck throughout his prophecy. God has forsaken Israel; he will be like a lion to it and carry it off to destruction; none will be able to save it. The wind has wrapped Israel up in its wings and will carry it clean away (4:19). The destruction of Israel will be so complete that even the life of nature will be wiped out (4:3). There would seem to be no future but destruction and the end of the nation. But the note of hope is still there. Judgment would be corporate, but somehow redemption will be in it. It will be a purging judgment, and out of it a remnant shall be saved. The corporate whole will be refined and a penitent people emerge. Israel as a corporate whole will remain but saved as by fire.

The Triumph of Covenant Love

It has been noted already that *chesed* has an element of steadfastness and loyalty about it. It expresses, as H. W. Robinson has written. "The moral bondage of love, the loving discharge of an admitted obligation, the voluntary acceptance of a responsibility".⁵ It is this quality of steadfastness in the divine love which gives the prophet cause for hope. Whereas Amos seems to have almost no hope at all, Hosea is equally sure of judgment and destruction, yet he still hopes. The difference lies in this emphasis on the divine covenant-love, to which Amos never refers.

The prophet begins by symbolically naming his children, Jezreel, Lo-Ammi, Lo-Ruhamah, all names which are pregnant with the coming judgment and which bespeak Yahweh forsaking Israel. Yet out of the deeps of his own marital experience and his redemptive search for Gomer, Hosea

5. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

stretches up to heaven and grasps the reality of the divine grace. So in chapter 2, the prophet sees God pleading with his bride, Israel, and declares that he who has definitely declared that he will not have mercy (Lo-Ruhamah), can yet say to Israel "Ruhamah." Just as long years ago God had taken the initiative and called Israel up out of Egypt, so he would do it again. He will betroth Israel unto him in covenant-love and faithfulness (2:19ff). He will once more say, "Thou art my people" and Israel shall say, "Thou art my God" (2:23). Grace will triumph not only in the salvation of the people but in the health of the land, for land and people are bound both to God and to one another (2:18, 21, 22). The sin of Israel brings destruction to the nation and desert-conditions to the land. Salvation means that the environmental whole will be restored, a lesson that we need to learn today when our scientific treatment of nature shows little concern for God's plan and is mainly concerned with the profit motive.

This theme of grace is found throughout the prophecy. It is seen in the gracious call to repentance of 6:1-3 and 14:1-3, and it comes out in the gracious cry of frustrated covenant-love in 11:8. How can Yahweh forsake Israel whom he has graciously chosen and bound to himself in covenant relationship? He can no more do so than Hosea can give up Gomer. So the prophet can cry in the name of Yahweh: "I will not execute the fierceness of my anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim" (11:9). Indeed the judgment and destruction are here clearly accepted and it is assumed that Israel will be scattered among the nations, yet its children will cease trembling at the lionlike roar of Yahweh and he will make them dwell in their houses (11:10, 11). So, too, when Israel confesses the failure of all political alliances, the mercy of God will come breaking through. He will love them freely, and his anger will turn away from them (14:4). Israel's ultimate restoration is assured by the triumph of divine grace.

The prophet clearly has in mind that judgment will be a purging and disciplinary experience out of which a cry of genuine repentance will emerge. His southern contemporary, Isaiah, was preaching a doctrine of a purged remnant, and it would seem that this too was in the prophet's mind. A remnant would turn to God and be saved when

the Day of Yahweh supervened. The issue of how this would happen, since the will of Israel was so infected and its sinful bondage so complete, found no solution in the prophet's mind. It waited for Ezekiel to grasp the reality of the activity of God's Spirit creating a new heart and a new spirit within man (Ezek. 11:19; 36:26), and for Jeremiah to see God making a new covenant with the individual Israelite which shall be so inwardly transforming that Yahweh's law shall be written on his heart (Jer. 31:31ff). God's redemptive activity in the end would not wait for the impossible repentance of a rebellious people. God, as Hosea saw, would take the initiative, would woo Israel, and would create the conditions that would make possible a true repentance, a turning back to God. Jeremiah and Ezekiel spelled out in detail what those conditions must be and saw them as the work of redemptive grace. Our Lord made the vision an actuality on Calvary, and continually works it in our hearts by the activity of his Spirit.

One closing thought is appropriate. The mark of the true prophet is a pathos with the divine, an inner sympathy which gives insight into the divine mind and will. This bond of sympathy was forged in the heart of Hosea by his own experience with Gomer. Out of the redemptive initiative and activity of his own love for his wayward wife he looked into the heart of God. That window into the inner life of the divine was flung wide open when God became man and issued forth from his heavenly splendor in the garb of a servant. In seeing Jesus we are seeing God, and the heart of our Lord's work was a cross on which he paid the price for our redemption. Yet the price that was there paid in the actuality of history was already borne in the heart of the eternal God, and it was given to Hosea along with others to grasp from afar the truth that love cannot redeem without suffering, that there is no atonement with God unless God himself pays the price, that grace is God meeting his own demands himself and doing so in a covenant-love that will not give up his people.

Already, extended downwards into history through the personality of his prophet, the living God was bearing redemptively the sin of man and pointing to that decisive and ultimate act in which by the suffering of the divine our sins are forgiven and our lives remade.

Exegetical Study of Hosea

BY JOHN JOSEPH OWENS

The introduction places emphasis upon the fact that the message of this book is the word of God. It makes no reference to the actual writer. The historical setting is made clear.¹ According to the majority of scholars, the ministry of Hosea was concluded prior to 735 B.C.²

"Word of Yahweh" deserves great emphasis³ inasmuch as it gives authority to his message by showing that it came as revelation⁴ and not as mental exercise or personal assumption.

The name "Hosea" is not spelled in the regular way⁵ since it is built from the Hiphil infinite absolute of the root which means to deliver, liberate, or save. This root is closely related to names such as Isaiah, Jesus, and Joshua.⁶

The tragedy of Hosea and his wife parallels the tragedy of Yahweh and His people. 1:2-3:5

The marriage of the sensitive prophet to the daughter of Diblaim was the means which was used to show Hosea the relationship of Yahweh to Israel. As Hosea realized the infidelity of Gomer he understood the heinousness of the infidelity of his own people to its God.

1. There are several small problems of dating. Why was there mention only of Jeroboam of the northern kingdom? Why was Hezekiah mentioned since he did not begin his reign until c. 715 B. C. when the northern kingdom had fallen six years previously? Such problems can be resolved by recognizing that the title was added later by a southern editor.

2. Frederick Carl Eiselen, *The Minor Prophets* (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1907), p. 17.

3. Words placed first in a Hebrew sentence receive the greater emphasis. Kyle M. Yates, *The Essentials of Biblical Hebrew Revised* by John Joseph Owens (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 35.

4. This is the regular word for revelation through a prophet. *Torah* (law, instruction) was the technical expression for such through a priest and *'etsah* (counsel) was revelation through a wiseman.

5. There were four other men who bore that name. It was the earlier name of Joshua (Numbers 13:8, 16); the last king of Israel (II Kings 17); an Ephraimite chief under David (I Chron. 27:20); and a chief under Nehemiah, (Nehemiah 10:34).

6. Brown, Driver and Briggs' lexicon translates this name "Salvation." Keil makes it mean "helper."

1:2 God's Command to Hosea

"The beginning of the word of the Lord" is supported by the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, and Targum. The Masoretic text has a Piel perfect 3 m.s. or, as some Hebrew manuscripts, a Piel infinitive construct. As an infinitive the literal rendering would be "the beginning of the speaking of Yahweh." If the form is a perfect,⁷ the proper translation would be "Yahweh spoke at the first."

"By Hosea"—The preposition translated "by" may also be translated "through" or "with". Consequently, it is impossible to be dogmatic as to whether God was speaking with Hosea or with others through Hosea. In either case, the import is that it is God's word. Such word must reach the consciousness of the prophet. When the prophet extends that revelation into life he becomes a true spokesman for God.

"Wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms"—This statement is the only clue to the chastity of Gomer prior to her marriage. In the first place, it should be noted that this is not the ordinary expression for harlot. This is an unusual expression.⁸ Many consider it is used to indicate that Gomer was faithful to her husband for a time at the beginning of the marriage but that the deeply rooted tendencies toward unchastity asserted themselves⁹ later under the guise of the worship of the fertility cult. This proleptic view finds some support in the fact that only the first child is positively denoted in the text as being the child of Hosea. Since this account is related in the third person¹⁰ the story was compiled sometime after the events by a person other than Hosea. Thus, the writer has been very specific in indicating that Gomer was not a prostitute. But at the same time he has indicated that her character revealed itself

7. So Gesenius, Kell, and Harper.

8. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1906) p. 276. A plural absolute intensive word meaning fornication is used.

9. George Adam Smith, Marti, Nowack, Cheyne, Davidson, Kuenen, Wellhausen, W. R. Smith, Elselen, Gordis, H. Wheeler Robinson, Hyatt, J. Paterson, Bewer. See the article on 'Introduction to Hosea' in this issue, p. 501.

10. H. H. Rowley, *The Marriage of Hosea* (The John Rylands Library Bulletin), p. 201.

subsequently.¹¹ Dr. Hall has adequately dealt with other views and advocates this one.¹²

"Whoredoms" is a noun built from the Qal passive participle and is used to indicate fornication in sexual, international, and religious affairs.¹³ Thus, the phrase may have these following connotations. Gomer may have been a prostitute, a northern Israelite, a temple priestess, or one who became a temple priestess.

"For the land doth definitely commit whoredoms repeatedly¹⁴ from after Yahweh"—The covenant name for the God of Israel is used in this condemnation even as it is used in the introduction to show that this word is from the God with whom they had an existing and sacred covenant. This phrase is parallel to the marital command to Hosea. It shows that the Israelites were adulterous and idolatrous even though they had covenanted to be pure and faithful.

11. R. H. Pfeiffer suggests that this term was used to describe a citizen of northern Israel rather than an impure woman. A northern Israelite might be described in such low terms by a southern Israelite writer.

Some (T. H. Robinson, O. R. Sellers, H. C. May, R. B. Y. Scott, Fleming James) hold that the distinctive expression indicates that Gomer was not a professional prostitute but a prostitute that was dedicated to the worship in the fertility cult of Baal. These women were known as *kedeshah* or *kedeshoth* (Deut. 23:18; Hosea 4:14; Gen. 38:21, 22). The practice of sacred prostitution is known in Babylonia. However, such worship is foreign to the practice and spirit of true religion among the Israelites. As a temple priestess she was a devotee of a false worship. As a Yahweh prophet Hosea was devoted to the true God. Under this interpretation, the prophet was commanded to marry this woman who was a worshiper of a different God. Could he have thought to convert her to the true worship? Or did he follow blindly without question? Even so, such view does not answer the moral problem. The variation of this view which holds that she was chaste at the time of marriage and later became a devotee of the fertility cult appears to be advisable.

12. See this issue.

13. Brown, Driver, Briggs, *op. cit.* p. 276. Sexual fornication is the most frequent use of the root verb. Cf. Deut. 22:21; Gen. 38:24; Lev. 21:9; Joshua 2:1; 6:22. International impurity is the figure of improper intercourse with foreign nations. Cf. Isaiah 23:17; Ezekiel 23:30. Religious whoredom is the use of the root to indicate intercourse with other deities which involved even actual prostitution. Cf. Exodus 34:15, 16; Deut. 31:16; Ezekiel 6:9; 20:30; Judges 2:17; 8:27, 33.

14. The use of the Qal infinitive absolute preceding the finite verb gives special emphasis to the force of the action. Yates, *op. cit.* p. 150. Gesenius-Kautzsch, *Hebrew Grammar*, 113 n (a), p. 342. The finite verb is Qal imperfect 3 f.s. The imperfect indicates a repeated action instead of past activity. Yates, *op. cit.* p. 140 "frequentative imperfect." Gesenius-Kautzsch, *op. cit.* 107 e, f. p. 105.

"Land" is used collectively but indicates the individual citizens of northern Israel. The prophet represents the covenant God. Gomer who entered the marital covenant with Hosea represents the individual northern Israelites who entered into the covenant with Yahweh. The people had flagrantly violated the covenant while hiding behind the respectability of marriage. Even as Gomer treated her vow despicably, Israel went awhoring after other Gods.¹⁵ This figure has been drawn from the fertility cult of his day. But from this thought pattern he moves to new and fuller, yet related, concepts filling them with spiritual meaning.¹⁶

1:3 Marriage of Hosea and Gomer

Hosea, in following the word of Yahweh, married Gomer the daughter of Diblaim. The notation of names shows the historicity intended by the writer.

"And bore to him a son"—The text indicates that Jezreel was the son of Hosea by Gomer.¹⁷

14:-6 Birth of Jezreel

"Call his name, Jezreel"—The word Jezreel means "God sows." It is also the name of the famous city of the Plain. In this context, the name refers to the historical connection of the city rather than to the actual root meaning.¹⁸ Jezreel recalls the battleground (Judges 4:13ff; 7:1; I Sam. 29:1ff) on which Jehu destroyed the family of Ahab (II Kings 10:1-11).

"I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu and cause the kingdom of the house of Israel to cease"—Thus, this name refers to the past and also refers to the future punishment in that the Kingdom of Jehu and

15. William Rainey Harper, *Amos and Hosea. International Critical Commentary* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 211.

16. *The Interpreter's Bible*, VI, p. 575.

17. Verses 6 and 8 do not include the phrase "to him." This fact has led some interpreters to say that "Lo ruhamah" and "Lo ammi" were not children of Hosea. They were born to Gomer after she strayed into harlotry. This is possible though by no means definite. The "to him" may have been omitted in such a short account (*Inter. Bible*, VI, p. 569) or may have been merely understood. In any case, any child of Gomer would be construed as a child of Hosea as long as Gomer lived in the home of Hosea.

18. Rashi makes a connection with the scattering of the Israelites among the nations in order that God can replant Israel in the rightful heritage. This seems to put more into the name than the context allows or indicates.

northern Israel shall be destroyed. Hosea sees these events as imminent. The house of Jehu was finished when king Zechariah was killed by Shallum (II Kings 15:8-12). Northern Israel was destroyed in 722-721 when Samaria fell to the Assyrian king Sargon. At the defeat, 27,290 people were carried into captivity (II Kings 17:1-6, 21-23).

This is not an unusual use of proper names. Isaiah made use of the same spiritual device. His two children were given symbolic names. Shearyashub was a sign in that his name signified that a remnant would return. Maher-shalhashbaz was a message in that his name meant spoil speedeth, prey hasteth. This avenue of a spiritual message was well known and respected by the Israelites.

"Break the bow of Israel"—This is the figure of military power (Jeremiah 49:35). It is true that Jehu slew Joram with a bow (II Kings 9:24) and that Zechariah was slain by Shallum in Jezreel.¹⁹ But the northern kingdom endured approximately twenty years more. So the reference appears to be the destruction of the military strength of the nation in 722-721 B.C. The agent of breaking the bow is not mentioned but Hosea indubitably envisioned Assyria whose strength was already evident in Tiglath Pileser.

1:6-7 Birth of Lo-ruhamah

"Lo ruhamah"—*Lo* is the negative particle. *Ruhamah* is a Pual perfect form 3 f.s. of the root *raham* which means love or have compassion. The translation of the name would be "she is not loved."²⁰

The fact that this verse reads "bare a daughter" and omits the phrase "to him" joins the evidence of the meaning of the name to establish the strong possibility that Hosea knew that *Lo ruhamah* was not his daughter.²¹ This child would not receive the love which a child would be expected to receive from both her parents. She would be reared without the privilege of domestic unity and happiness.

The reason for such a name in the total purpose of the book is shown in verses 6b-7. God's love or compassion has

19. *Interpreter's Bible*, VI p. 570.

20. So Gesenius, Keil, Eiselen, Harper. Some would interpret *ruhamah* as a defective Paul feminine participle and thus translate the name "the unloved one." However, *lo*, is not used in connection with a participle in this matter.

21. So Harper, Soncino.

been thwarted. There has been a breach in the covenant so vast that he has withdrawn the expected corollary of the covenant. "I will not add more love (*raham*) to the house of Israel." The words of Amos are recalled here. "For three transgressions . . . yea for four, I will not revoke the punishment thereof." "The end is come upon my people Israel; I will not again pass by them any more" (Amos 8:2).

"That I should actually forgive them"—This again is the use of an infinitive absolute preceding its cognate finite verb. *Nasa'* means to lift, carry, or take a burden; to take away or carry off in the sense of removing guilt, iniquity, or transgression. Thus, the word can bear the connotation of forgive or pardon.²²

Verse 7 breaks the force of the passage against northern Israel. This verse agrees with the impact of Isaiah and Micah since they were Judean prophets. The main message of Hosea is directed against the northern kingdom. Thus, most commentators question this verse.²³

1:8-9 Birth of Lo ammi

"Now when she had weaned Lo ruhamah"—Children were generally weaned between the age of two and three. Thus, the three children were born during a six year period.²⁴

"And bore a son"—Again, this phrase "to him" is omitted. If the second child was not Hosea's then the third also is not.

"Lo ammi" means "not my people." This name may be an evidence that Hosea realized that this son was not his child.

"Because ye not my people and I (on my part) shall not be to you"—The reason for naming this child "not my peo-

22. So Harper, Soncino, Keil, Eiselen and Mauchline. The translation "but I will utterly take them away" is possible but less tenable.

23. Wellhausen, Kuenen, Cheyne, Nowack, G. A. Smith, Marti, Stade. Some would deny this verse to Hosea while others would place this verse in a different context. This verse shows clearly that the writer sees that the southern kingdom is the avenue through which God's love will be felt since his love is withdrawn from the northern kingdom. The deliverance of the southern kingdom will be by an unusual means. The expected manner of deliverance of a nation would be by a military victory. But this salvation would not come that route. Distinct emphasis is put upon this fact by stating that the covenant God Yahweh was the God of the southern kingdom.

24. Harper, *op. cit.* p. 213; Eiselen, *op. cit.* p. 42.

ple" was the complete abandonment of Israel. She had broken the covenant and therefore God disowned her.

The names of the three children indicate the actual state of the relationship between Yahweh and the people. Jezreel was a living sermon of an irrevocable judgment. Lo ruhamah was a constant reminder that God had withdrawn his love from the covenant people. Lo ammi shows that Yahweh had rejected those who had been called his people. Israel should be treated now just as a heathen nation. No longer should she claim the protection of the covenant God for the covenant had been broken. Whereas they had claimed that they belonged to Yahweh and he belonged to them, this marks the abolition of such claims. He would no longer be to them and they would not be his people (Amos 5:14-15).

1:10-2:1 (Hebrew 2:1-3) Israel Restored

This poetic paragraph marks a blunt transition in the train of thought. The transition is so abrupt that many interpret that this is out of place here.²⁵

There are two basic thoughts in this paragraph. Israel would be numerous. The inestimable size would indicate the presence of God's immeasurable blessing. No longer would this people be estranged from God. It could not be said "Lo ammi" but rather it would be said that they were "sons of the living God."

The other thought expressed was the unity of Israel and Judah. The division of the kingdoms would be healed. There would be a unity which would result in having one head.²⁶ The united nation will be aggressive for they will go up from the land. The figure of Jezreel is changed from that of judgment to the day of victory.

The connecting link between the two sections is the use of the three names. However, now the people are victorious instead of the defeated; claimed instead of denied;

25. George Adam Smith, Kuenen, Heilprin, Wellhausen, Giesebrecht, Volz, Nowack, Marti, Cheyne, Davidson, and Harper.

26. Kimchi, Rashi and the Targum say the one head refers to David. Ibn Ezra sees Sennacherib who succeeded Sargon as king of Assyria. Sennacherib's forces besieged Jerusalem in 701 B.C. However, an identification is not necessary to the understanding of the passage.

loved instead of repudiated (I Peter 2:10). With this development there is no valid reason for doubting the authenticity of the passage.²⁷

"Sons of the living God"²⁸—They shall not be children of idols of stone or wood. They shall not be children of the fertility cult devotees. The idea of sonship of man and fatherhood of God is not foreign to Hebrew thought. It was commonly understood that the nation owed her very existence to her God. Some would call them *Lo ammi* but they would be regal heirs of God. The term "sons of the living God" has definite connections with the sons of the king.

"The children of Judah and the children of Israel"—Since the term "children of Judah" is definitely stated, the children of Israel of verse one refers to the northern kingdom.

"Say ye unto your brothers, Ammi"—*Ammi*, "my people," is used here in contradistinction to *Lo ammi*, "not my people", previously.

"And to your sisters, Ruhamah"—The contrast is evident in using Ruhamah, "loved", in relation to the previous *Lo ruhamah*, "not loved."

2:2-23 *Israel's Unworthiness and Rebetrothal*

2:2-13 Israel's sin condemned

The depth of the sin is described in vivid descriptive Hebrew. The details of her whoredoms expressively explain that she has deserved complete estrangement and scathing punishment.

"Contend with your mother"—The descendants of Israel are told to plead for the mother Israel. The sons of Israel who are sensitive to the voice of Father God are called to be busy in the restoration of the covenant.²⁹ The word "contend" (*rivu*) is often used of conducting a legal case, contending with words. It is related to kindred Semitic words that mean cry, shout, or quarrel noisily.³⁰ This figure is sufficient to show that the sin of Israel is so heinous that

27. *The Interpreter's Bible*, VI, p. 575.

28. *Beney 'el hay* is the expression also in Joshua 3:10, Psalm 42:2; 84:2.

29. Cf. Isaiah 40:1. The intensity of the pleading is indicated by the repetition of the imperative.

30. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 936.

God had filed a lawsuit against her. Yahweh has called the individual Israelite to engage as defense lawyer and advocate in order to effect a reconciliation. Prior to restoration, there must be the abolition of sinfulness. The purpose of contention would be to "exert a corrective, reforming influence on the corrupt aggregate."³¹ Self-preservation and the natural love of a child for mother are valid reasons for expecting the individual to be interested in the contention.

"For she is not my wife and I am not her husband"—Israel had sunk so low into marital infidelities that the actual marriage had been dissipated and abandoned. She had removed herself from the responsibilities and privileges in such a way that she was no longer a wife and consequently he was not a husband.

"Let her put away her whoredoms from her face and her adulteries from between her breasts"—This is grammatically connected with the command to contend. The end result of the pleading is to effect her repentance. These expressions are to be interpreted literally.³²

Verses 3 and 4 show the consequences of her behavior. Unless she changes, the anticipated action of the husband is clearly expressed.

"Lest I strip her naked"—In this verse there are five parallels depicting the punishment. He will deprive her of (1) protector, (2) possession, (3) champion, (4) productivity, and (5) life. Verse 4 shows the direct relation with 1:2 and 6. It is difficult, if not impossible, to define clearly and consecutively the ones spoken to and the ones spoken of. The entire book is marked by abrupt transitions. For instance, in this context the children are spoken to in verses 2 and 3 but are spoken of in the succeeding verses. As this message is delivered, viewed in retrospect, the marital experience

31. Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

32. Eiselen, *loc. cit.*; A. Cohen (Ed.), *The Twelve Prophets* (Bournemouth: The Soncino Press, 1948), p. 7. Some refer the adulteries to the habit of wearing amulets between the breasts of heathen worshipers, thus referring to heathen idolatry as adulterating the worship. Others, following the allegorical interpretation, say the breasts are the law; some make the face and breasts open and secret sins; some make the whoredoms the paint on the harlot's face and the adulteries the adornments worn between the breasts. It seems clear that this describes the utter shamelessness of the harlot in uncovering the face and breasts in actual adultery.

of Hosea is so entwined with the infidelities of Israel that the writer passes easily from one to the other.³³

In verse 2 and verse 5 there are found the grounds on which the contention is based.³⁴ 1. She failed to keep her marriage covenant. 2. She adulterated the covenant in that she played the harlot. 3. This infidelity was premeditated for she determinedly said, I shall go after my paramours.³⁵ She ceased to accept the fruits of the covenant and pursued the gifts of other gods. Nourishment (bread and water), clothing (wool and flax), and satisfaction (oil and drink) became more important than anything else. Furthermore, she erroneously thought that her paramours supplied them. She had disbelieved that such were from the God of the Israelites. Even so, she had used that which Yahweh had given her for the idolatrous worship of Baal.

2:6 "Therefore, behold, I am hedging up . . ."—This construction³⁶ shows what he is doing now since the sin has been done.

2:12 "Vines and her fig-trees"—This is the figure of safety, security, and happy provisions.³⁷

2:14-23 Yahweh's Plan of Rebetrothal and Restoration

These verses touch exclusively upon the plan and activity of Yahweh.³⁸ This shows the promise made by the covenant God. No mention is made of the condition which must be met prior to the fulfillment of the glorious restoration. Every promise is fraught with a condition, (whether such is stated or implied). Here the condition of repentance is

33. Cohen, *op. cit.* p. 7; Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

34. 2:2 Contend with your Mother . . . contend . . . and let her put away, etc. (1) *For* she is not my wife . . . (vs. 5) (2) *for* their Mother hath played the harlot . . . (3) *for* she said, I will go after my lovers.

35. For Israel, these paramours were the Baalim who were the Canaanite gods. (Wellhausen, Cheyne, Gunkel, Nowack, Marti, Orelli, Eiselen.) This fertility cult had caused the perversion of many an Israelite. The Baal worshipers thought that their god gave them renewal of life as related to the natural elements of the sky, to agriculture, and sexual productivity.

36. Use of personal pronoun with the participle shows continuing action of immediate future. Cf. Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 236-6; Gesenius-Kautzsch, *op. cit.*, 116; Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

37. Cf. I Kings 4:25; Micah 4:4; Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 48; Cohen *op. cit.*, p. 9.

38. Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

definitely understood.³⁹ The spiritual covenant and marriage covenant are interwoven in this context.

"Therefore, behold I am about to woo her"—(See footnote 36 on the construction). The word allure is used here in the good sense of persuading with endearing expressions.

All of the remnants of Baal worship must be eradicated. No more will there be reason for mentioning fertility cult names. For he shall be called "My husband."

"And I want to betroth them to me"—Three times in verses 19 and 20 this is expressed for emphasis. Since the former marriage had been dissolved by her violations of the covenant, the remarriage may be contracted only after a rebetrothal.⁴⁰ The accumulation of the six adverbial modifiers insure permanence, righteousness, fidelity, and love. These were the factors which were non-existent in the first marriage. These are the most profound words in the entire Old Testament. "Forever" is the word *'olam* which puts the emphasis upon the long duration⁴¹ and thus permanence. "In ⁴² righteousness" is from the root *tsedeq*—righteousness, straightness. This is right activity and not mere existence. The noun is a picture of the right doing. This is the basic word which indicates the right relation to the maker and thus indicates the modern idea of salvation.

"In justice"—*Mishpat*. In this context it is an attribute of the one judging. Thus it is justice, right, or rectitude. As a parallel word to righteousness, it emphasizes both the right concepts and the right deeds as judged by the covenant God.

"In loving kindness"—*Hesed*. This word is dealt with adequately in the article on "The Theology of Hosea." In this context the idea is brought to the foreground in that there must be a devoted love between the parties of a betrothal.

"In mercies" — *Rahamim*. Compare this word with the names *Lo ruhamah* and *Ruhamah*.

"In faithfulness" — *'emunah*. This is steadfastness, moral

39. Hosea 4:14; Eiselen *loc. cit.*

40. The rebetrothal is expressed by the unusual imperfect prefixed by simple waw. This is an imperfect of desirability. Yates, *op. cit.*, p. 144 "and let me betroth thee to me."

41. It may be long duration in the past or in the future. Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 761-2.

42. This preposition of price shows the gift to the bride (Brown, Driver and Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 77). The same preposition is prefixed to the following nouns.

trustworthiness, fidelity, and integrity of character, which would stem from their loyalty to their covenant God even under provocations.⁴³ This is closely related to *hesed* (Cf. Ps. 89:25; 92:3; 98:3).

2:21-23 These are the benefits which shall be given to the bride. Not only shall she know Yahweh, but he shall reveal himself as the true source of fertility. Through the responsiveness of God, the outcast children shall be the true children of the living God. Note the reversal of the three names used earlier.

3:1-5 *The Repurchase and Retention of Gomer*

This chapter tells a necessary part of the story which was begun in the first chapter. It is necessary for the purpose of the prophet to show the parallel between the covenant God and his people. Gomer had deserted Hosea in the pursuit of her shameful whoredoms and had become a slave concubine of another man. But Hosea, compelled by his devotedness, steadfastness, and love, bought her back and gave her another opportunity to prove herself. Note, however, that the chapter does not indicate that she ever resumed her place as his wife in the home. It indicates only that after she was brought under Hosea's roof again, she was completely secluded from man in order that she could be purified. This purification was absolutely necessary. Not only the illegitimate intercourse was forbidden but also the relationship with Hosea was withheld.

"Again, go, love a woman"—The word Again goes with Go⁴⁴ and not with the preceding phrase, "And the Lord said." The statement, go again, coupled with the symbolism of the book will show that Gomer is the "woman" of 3:1.

"They love flagons of wine"—The A.R.V. "love cakes of raisins" is the correct translation of the massoretic text. The Israelites love the raisin cakes (not the heathen gods). This refers to the use of such in foreign sacrifices (Jeremiah 7:18) and also to the feasts in connection with heathen worship. They desired the adoption of the Baalim cult into the worship of Yahweh.

43. Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 487.

44. Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 216; Eiselen, *op. cit.*, p. 53; Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 12. Cf. Septuagint, Syriac, Vulgate, Wellhausen, Nowack, Gunkel, Marti, G. A. Smith, and Cheyne.

"So I bought her"—Why did he have to purchase her? The reason is not given. It seems logical to understand that Gomer had become a slave and that it was necessary that Hosea pay the price of a slave.⁴⁵

"For fifteen pieces of silver, and a homer⁴⁶ of barley and a half-homer⁴⁷ of barley"—The actual value of the payment in currency is impossible to ascertain since the purchase price of barley is unknown for that time. But it has been suggested that the barley was in the amount of fifteen shekels which added to the previously mentioned fifteen shekels would amount to the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32; Zechariah 11:12).

Verse 3 states the conditions of the return of Gomer. She must be retained secluded. Her former activities must cease. Furthermore, she would not be restored immediately to the position of wife of Hosea. The text merely indicates that he brought her back to his protective custody. It is left unstated whether she proved herself to be worthy of restoration or whether she was restored. Since the point of the book is the hope for the restoration of Israel, that is the extent of the story of Hosea's marriage.

Verse 4 then turns to the parallel story of the children of Israel. They should remain inactive and static as far as the national affairs are concerned.

"Without king and without prince"—They shall have no rulers of state. These are the paramours with whom Israel had relations. The Israelites had not maintained a purity of national affairs.

"Without sacrifice and without pillar"—These are the sacrificial requirements which cover the religious requirements. They will be without worship which perhaps im-

45. It was forbidden by Deut. 24:1-4 for a woman to return to her first husband if she had married again even though her second husband had died. It may be that this law was not enforced at this time. Pusey says that it is exceptional and provides for her support until she is restored to wifehood. Some interpret this purchase to prevent any conflict with her paramour.

46. A homer is equal to ten ephahs or over eleven bushels.

47. The *lethek* is used only here. According to tradition a *lethek* is a half-homer of grain. So Hosea paid for Gomer part in silver and part in grain. The reason for such payment is unknown. He may not have had the whole amount available in silver. Calvin suggests that the money was a purchase price for her and that the grain was provision for Gomer.

plies a foreign captivity. These elements were used to signify the presence of God in the pagan worship.

"Without ephod⁴⁸ or teraphim⁴⁹"—Both were used to obtain an oracle. This was one avenue used to discover the divine will. It is not definite that Hosea considered these a great loss to the life of Israel. It rather appears that these were heathen worship and national evidences of her harlotry and that Israel must be without them before a reconciliation could be possible.

Verse 5 states the condition of Israel in the Messianic age. "In the end of days" does not refer to the end of the world or the age of the supremacy of the Hebrew nation. This phrase is used by the prophets to refer to the reign of the Messiah.

4:1-19 *Yahweh's Lawsuit Against Israel*

The remaining portion⁵⁰ of the book is directed against the people and priests of Israel. It is generally dated after the death of Jeroboam II.

The first chapter began with the word of Yahweh to Hosea. The fourth chapter began with the second member of the parallelism in that it is the word of Yahweh to the children of Israel.

Israel is commanded to listen because Yahweh has instituted a lawsuit⁵¹ against Israel. The grounds upon which the lawsuit was filed are found in 4:1b-2. The absence of those qualities which should be expected in such a relationship was the first evidence presented. There was no fidelity,

48. Ephod is used two ways. It may be the garment of the priest (Exodus 28:6ff) which was used as a means of divination. Or it may have been an image of God overlaid with gold and silver (Judges 8:24-27 speaks of Gideon making an ephod and Israel playing the harlot after it). Cf. Judges 17:5; 1 Sam. 21:9.

49. Teraphim were idols. Some were household gods (Gen. 31:19, 30 and Judges 17:5). Some were small but others were as large as an adult human and is evidenced by 1 Sam. 19:13. Many believe that these were images of ancestors. It is clear they were not acceptable in true Israelite worship.

50. Chapters 4-14 are taken as a unit even though no definite arrangement is clear. Distinct thought breaks begin with 4:1; 5:1; 9:1; 11:12; 13:1; and 14:1.

51. Brown, Driver, and Briggs' lexicon (p. 937) shows that this controversy is "dispute or case at law."

devotedness, or knowledge of God⁵² which were the most important qualities in the rebetrothal.

What condemnation is contained in the presentation of evidence in verse two. This is a description⁵³ of the national situation after the death of Jeroboam. Zechariah, Shallum, and Menahem marched into the kingship within twelve months. The basic evidence is that they have broken the Commandments.⁵⁴ Sin was bursting out all over. Murder⁵⁵ followed upon murder. The evils of their day overlapped each other. This legal evidence has caused the conditions which are noted in verse three.⁵⁶

The sin and unfaithfulness of the people are so deeply ingrained that an appeal to the judge is useless. No counter-suit can be filed because the people are just like the priestlings and stumbling prophets.⁵⁷ They are characterized by a lack of knowledge of God.⁵⁸ They had failed to grasp the necessity of true understanding, experience, and faithfulness to the relationship with God.

"I will destroy thy mother"—Thy mother refers to the priestly order rather than to the nation as a whole.

The reason that the people had a lack of knowledge was that the priests had rejected knowledge. Those charged with the responsibility of having and dispensing knowledge had rejected and forgotten the "teaching of"⁵⁹ their God.

52. Notice that these three elements are in the statement of rebetrothal of 2:19-20. Truth (4:1) is from the same stem as faithfulness (2:20). Goodness (4:1) is the same word translated loving-kindness (2:19). Knowledge is from the verb used in 2:20.

53. The accumulation of infinitives absolute gives vivid emphasis.

54. Swearing and lying break the ninth commandment. Killing breaks the sixth, stealing, the eighth, and committing adultery is a violation of the seventh.

55. Blood (plural) indicates bloodshed or bloodguiltiness and murder.

56. Verse three does not indicate what is yet future but rather what is the present situation.

57. Verse 4b is very difficult to interpret. But, following Beck, G. A. Smith, Eiselen, the Talmud, and Harper the text is translated "Thy people are as their priestlings." The literal rendering of the Hebrew would be "Thy people are as they that strive with the priest." The meaning is quite clear that the people have rebelled against God and have followed the priests too easily in contentiousness.

58. See G. A. Smith, *op. cit.*

59. Torah here is not the technical term law known after the exile. Here it is the teaching or instruction of God. That avenue of discerning the will of God should have been the possession of the priests. Some expressions of the divine will had been written and some had not. Both are contained in Torah in this context.

The priests had led the people astray and had profited by the sin of people. So much so that one could not distinguish the leader of religion from the worst sinner. The more numerous and more powerful they became (verse 7) the more sinful they became. Prosperity led to moral laxness and spiritual degradation.

"Whoredom and wine take away the heart"—Note here the connection of immorality and strong drink. It removes the understanding. Heart does not indicate romantic reactions but wilful and considered activities. Their perversion had robbed them of moral perception. Their attraction to the false worship⁶⁰ had obscured their eyes so that they could not discern. However, there would be no double set of morals set up separately for the men and the women, or the people and the priests.

Israel had stubbornly refused to bend her will to meet her God. She had even refused to consider that she was wrong in any detail. She had been as a stubborn heifer. Yahweh had provided her with abundance and satisfaction but she refused to partake. She acted like a lamb in a large place. Ephraim⁶¹ was so selfishly bound to idols that the case was hopeless. Israel claimed to be worshiping in the name of Yahweh but had brought over so much idolatry into her worship that there would be no need for the prophet to try to reform her. Therefore, God said to Hosea, "Let him alone."

Chapters 5-8 give a graphic description of the extent of Israel's sin. Sin had penetrated every fibre of the nation from the greatest to the lowest.

5:1-15 *Condemnation of the Complete Corruption of Israel*

This chapter falls into two sections. 5:1-7 shows the guilt. The rebuke is addressed to the priests, the nation, and the king with all his household. Again the prophet returns to the theme that the people are destroyed for the lack of knowledge (5:4). Such ignorance is contrasted with verse 3 which recalls the omniscience of God. The worst condem-

60. The context shows clearly that the immorality is in the practice of Baal worship. In verse 14 is the term *kedeshoth*. Cf. fn. 11.

61. Ephraim refers to the northern kingdom. Since from Ephraim the "chief trouble arose, the prophet perhaps thought that this was a fitting designation for a wayward nation." See A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

nation possible, however, is that the pride testifies to his face. The haughty and arrogant self-aggrandizement proves their inability to improve since they think that their illegitimate cultic service is approved by Yahweh.

8-15 describes the coming punishment as the judgment upon their sin. Destruction is pictured as an attack by an invading army. Muster⁶² an army to protect against an invader. Gibeah and Ramah were situated on hills and therefore were well suited for raising an alarm. Even though an army is gathered, Ephraim will be destroyed. Any attempt to protect themselves will prove impotent because "he determined that he would walk after a commandment⁶³." Ephraim had become so completely addicted to foreign cultic interests that the judgment was irrevocable.

The most devastating attack will be from within. Yahweh⁶⁴ is destroying slowly but certainly. "As moth . . . as rottenness" — the moth and worm are consumers of materials which work quietly. The term rottenness is actually worm-eating.

Sickness and wound are not pictures of corruption but of disaster which resulted from corruption. Wound is the sore which needs to be pressed out. When Ephraim sees such it will be too late, but she will run to a foreign power just as she catered to a foreign God.

Yahweh is even more terrifying. He is as a lion dragging away the prey. A lion so fierce that none would dare to interfere. With Yahweh as the destroyer, of what value would be the defenses of King Contentious?

62. The imperatives, blow ye and sound an alarm, are the most vivid expression for prediction. He expected a foreign invasion soon.

63. The word translated commandment occurs only in Hosea 5:11 and Isaiah 28:10. The root verb means to command or give charge. However, a word with similar sound means emptiness and vanity. It is difficult to understand "Command." The Septuagint, Syriac, and Targum support the word "vanity." It is interpreted by Cheyne, Nowack, and also G. A. Smith that vanity was original and referred to the Baalim. Such a change could have been an understandable scribal change. He thought that he heard *tsa* (commandment) instead of *sa'* (vanity).

64. The pronoun is emphatic. God's position as destroyer is unquestionable.

6:1-11 *Superficial Repentance and Incurable Corruption*

Chapter 6 opens with an expression of superficial and deceptive repentance. But this cannot expunge the guilt which must be made manifest to all. 6:1-3 is an expression of a repentance but the total chapter shows clearly that the depth and extent of repentance is merely that of speech and not that of sincere desire to follow Yahweh to the extent of changing the manner of life. Yahweh is pictured as "waiting for Israel to come back, and Israel is, in fact, coming back, but with a conception of Yahweh so false and an idea of repentance so inadequate as to make the whole action a farce."⁶⁵

"After two days . . . on the third day" — This is an idiom for a short while. Grammatically it expresses an indefinite number⁶⁶ but since the numbers are small the length of time is short.

"Revive us . . . raise us up . . . we may live" — This does not represent personal resurrection. It is national restoration from calamity and distress.⁶⁷ The vision of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1ff) expands this idea.

6:4-11 returns to the theme of the incurable corruption of the people. Yahweh knows the love and care which had been bestowed upon Israel. In despair he asks, What else can I do to bring you to true repentance?

"Your goodness" — See the word *hesed* above (2:14-23). Note the three-fold connotation of *hesed*. God's love to man, man's love to God, and man's love for fellow man must all be contained in this word. Any severance of this devotedness is sin.

"Like the morning cloud" — During the hot season in Palestine, the morning clouds are generally dispersed by the middle of the morning. Thus is expressed the instability and fickleness of the true character of Israel.

Israel had lulled herself into the complacency of believing that the offering of sacrifice was sufficient to satisfy the desires of Yahweh. "The sacrificial act without moral living

65. William Rainey Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

66. Gesenius-Kautzsch, *op. cit.*, 134, s.

67. For use of words compare Joshua 5:8; II Kings 8:9; 20:7.

is rejected by God.”⁶⁸ “This love is not love for God as distinguished from love for one’s fellow-men, but both.”⁶⁹

In verse 6, there is an excellent example of perfect parallelism as used by Hosea. Devotedness and the knowledge of God must go together. Note the emphasis placed on knowledge.

Even the priests had perverted their calling. They had become a band of thieving murderers. Evil was visible from the east to the west.⁷⁰ In the house of Israel there was evident idolatries and immoral practices connected with heathen worship.

7:1-16

The Iniquity of Israel

“When I would heal Israel, then is the iniquity . . . uncovered” — As Yahweh desired to forgive, he was repulsed by the unveiling of such enormous wickedness. His previous efforts toward reconciliation had been rebuffed. They had been interpreted as a sign of weakness. Consequently the people had become more flagrant in sin.

“Let them not say to their heart” — The heart is not the seat of emotions but is the base of mental and wilful activity. Let them not consider or imagine.

“They make their king glad with wickedness and princes with lies” — The people were urged on in their evil by the rulers. But any ruler who dotes on the sin of his subjects had negated any position of respect or semblance of authority.

7:8-16 Israel’s international adultery

“He mixeth himself among the nations” — National assimilation is national suicide. Yet Israel pursued the policy through the adoption of foreign customs and the appeal to the stronger nations for protection. Both were proof of their apostasy. These “strangers” (foreign nations) strangled them instead of strengthening them. Ephraim not only did not recognize this fact but haughtily persisted in wickedness.

68. A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

69. William Rainey Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

70. Gilead was east of the Jordan river. Shechem was west of the Jordan river. It was once a city of refuge but had become a den of robbers and murderers. King James has “by consent” but “toward Shechem” is preferable.

"A cake not turned"⁷¹ — A picture of ruin, folly, and inconsistency, and of the internal condition of Israel is contained in this one phrase. "How better describe a half-fed people, a half-cultured society, a half-lived religion, a half-hearted policy, than by a half-baked scone?"⁷²

"Like a silly dove" — The dove is known for its simplicity and unsuspicious nature. It flies from one danger to another. So Israel goes from Egypt to Assyria but Yahweh shall bring the deserved fate upon them.

"Like a deceitful bow" — A bow which should shoot at a prescribed target sends the arrow in an erring course. It fails to accomplish its purpose.

8:1-14

The Idolatry of Israel

Sound the alarm for the Assyrian host is prepared to swoop down. But the feeble profession of verse 2⁷³ provoked in an hour of danger has been accompanied by idols and not by Yahweh.

"The calf of Samaria" — Calf is sarcastic expression for bull. It refers to the idols set up in Dan and Bethel, the district of Samaria.

"They sow the wind . . . reap the whirlwind" — Wind is a picture of the vanity and profitless activities which led to the utter failure of Israel. Instead of reaping the same nothingness, they shall garner destruction.

9:1-10:15 *Punishment for Israel's Infidelity*

9:1-9 Israel threatened with Egyptian Exile

A direct parallel is drawn between the action of Israel and that which was described in the first three chapters concerning Gomer.

"Their sacrifices . . . as the bread of mourners" — Anything or anyone which comes near a dead body becomes unclean for seven days. Anyone who eats of this food shares the uncleanness. Their effort to perform any sacrificial act shall prove that they are unacceptable to God.

71. A cake cooked on a hot stone, if left unturned, burns on the bottom but the top remains uncooked.

72. George Adam Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, Vol. 1 (New York: Harper and Brothers), p. 273.

73. Wellhausen alters the text to read "To me they cry, My God! but I (Jehovah) know thee, O Israel."

"Solemn assembly . . . day of the feast" — In foreign captivity, a festival was prohibited. They had no possibility of carrying out the Torah.

9:10-17 Destructive doom of derelict Israel

Ancient Israel thrilled God with the prospects of real consecration but Israel became dedicated to evil and became abominable. Isaiah expressed this same thought in the song of Chapter 5. There was every reason to expect glory, joy, and fruit but Israel turned to become useless.

10:1-3 The greater Israel's prosperity, the more abundant her sinful altars.

10:4-8 Captivity will mean cessation of feasts.

Chapter 10 is a continuation of the thought of the preceding chapter. There will be a complete desecration of Israel.

10:9-15 Habitual sin causes abuse, tumult, and loss of king.

Sin has changed the pattern of automatic expectation. Israel was trained or broken in to tread grain but instead she must serve as a pack animal or one to pull the plow.

11:1-11 *Yahweh's Fatherly Yearning for His People*

Israel is reminded of the fatherly love which brought them out of the Egyptian bondage and also of the fatherly care in teaching them the very elementary activity of life. He loved them to the full but their sin will send them to an Assyrian captivity instead of another Egyptian bondage. Yet, the heart of a father breaks as he asks, "How can I give thee up?"

11:12-12:14 *Ephraim Condemned for Falsehood;
Reminded of Jacob and Moses*

Ephraim had no truth and was filled with falsity and deceit. Both Ephraim and Judah were parties to the controversy instituted by Yahweh. The experiences of Jacob and Moses are recalled. The place of the prophet is pointed out in contrast to the sinful opposition of Ephraim.

13:1-16 *Israel's Idolatry causes His Just Destruction
Instead of Exaltation*

Ephraim had attained a position of international prominence and spiritual superiority. Prosperity turned sour. At

the first taste of Baalism she signed her own death warrant. Now they sin more and more and therefore shall pass away as a morning cloud.

Continuing the thought of 12:5, God declares himself to be their covenant God who brought them from Egypt. He was the one who commanded them to have no other God (Exodus 20:3). "Besides me there is no savior" — How then could they hope to find deliverance in the images of their own handiwork? How did they think that the call to Assyria would bring relief?

Since Ephraim had dealt with falsehood relying on foreign elements to continue their prosperity, God would be "as a lion, as a leopard . . . as a bear . . . as a lioness."

14:1-8 *Exhortation to Repentance, Promise of Forgiveness*

Israel had pursued Baal. The only hope for reconciliation was to return unto Yahweh. If there is true repentance Yahweh will provide the health and prosperity. Only their flagrant idolatry and complacent infidelity had brought them to such low estate. Only a thorough repentance can stir Yahweh to act on behalf of Israel. The previous weak superficial professions had proved valueless and idle.

14:9 serves as an epilogue to the entire book. The entire message of the book is summarized in this one verse.

The Beginning of Associationalism Among English Baptists

BY HUGH WAMBLE

Possessing a doctrine of the church which sees the local congregation as the visible expression of the true spiritual church, seventeenth century English Baptists quite naturally introduced a system of associationalism which was unique. Congregationalists also held a doctrine of the local congregation, but this view was so rigidly held that they only reluctantly adopted the associational system in the nineteenth century.¹

Baptists were one with other Evangelicals or Protestants in defining the universal or general church as a spiritual body composed of all persons of all times and all places, who were called of God, confessed faith in Jesus Christ, and demonstrated in their lives that Jesus Christ is Lord. However, Baptists differed with other Evangelicals in refusing to differentiate the universal church from the particular church, or the invisible from the visible, to such an extent that they became antithetical. Baptists defined the membership of the local church with the same terms (grace, saving faith, holy living) which were used to define the membership of the universal church.

Baptists held that local churches are related to the universal church as integral parts of the whole.² However, they refused to admit that the universal church is restricted to the membership of local churches; the universal church is more than the sum total of particular churches.

General Baptists were forced to make the universal church larger than the sum total of particular churches for two reasons. First, they affirmed that children dying in infancy are admitted into the spiritual church on the basis of God's mercy. Secondly, they liberally conceded that some members of Paedo-baptist churches are in the universal church even though Paedo-baptist churches are "the un-

1. John Owen, *The True Nature of a Gospel and Its Government* (1689), abridged and edited by John Huxtable (London: James Clarke and Co., Ltd., 1947), introduction, p. 20.

2. Richard Deane, *A Copy of a Brief Treatise*, 1693, epistle dedicatory, p. vii.

holiest (generally) of all the Christian Churches in the world."³

Particular Baptists, on the other hand, could not restrict the membership of the universal church to the total membership of particular churches without rejecting their doctrine of election and denying their friendly relations with Calvinistic Paedo-baptists. They held that, whereas particular church membership is desirable and a duty incumbent on each believer, it is not essential to salvation.⁴

It was recognized, and freely admitted, by Baptists that hypocritical persons are in Baptist churches. These hypocrites are not members of the universal church, for hypocrites cannot deceive God.⁵ Moreover, the presence of hypocrites does not nullify a particular church if it faithfully seeks to detect and reform them. When hypocrites are detected they are to be disciplined, and if they do not reform they are to be excluded. Even if hypocrites remain invisible to true Christians and thus remain in visible churches, they are not invisible to God; He will not permit them to enter into eternal life on the basis of fraudulent membership in visible churches.

Early Baptists uniformly affirmed or implied the doctrine of the universal church.⁶ Though Helwys was primarily concerned with the rights of a particular church, he nevertheless held that the church is one, consisting of "divers particuler congregacions."⁷ Except for the moderately Calvinistic confession of 1679,⁸ General Baptists neglected the doctrine of the universal church in their confessions after 1640. However, they believed in the universal church, as Grantham indicated when he said that the doctrine of the

3. Thomas Grantham, *The Querist Examined*, 1679, pp. 34, 50f.

4. William Kiffin, *A Glimpse of Sions Glory*, 1641, pp. 21-33; Kiffin, *A Sober Discourse of Right to Church-Communion*, 1681, p. 1.

5. For evidence, see some of the writings of the "open communionist" John Bunyan: *The Complete Works of John Bunyan*, Gulliver's edition (Philadelphia: Bradley, Garretson and Co., 1872), pp. 838ff; *The Practical Works of John Bunyan*, edited by J. N. Brown (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1850-1852), I, 346; II, 91ff; VII, 9-85.

6. For several pertinent quotations, see E. A. Payne, *The Fellowship of Believers*, enlarged edition (London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd., 1952), pp. 20-37.

7. W. J. McGlothlin, editor, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1911), pp. 78f.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 145f.

church "truly and universally taken" is gladly affirmed by Baptists.⁹ At a later date, a General Baptist refused to restrict the universal church to any visible church or denomination; neither General Baptists nor constituents of any other Christian group have the right to make exclusive claims that they, and none others, are the only members of the universal church. Specifically, he attacked Anglicans and Roman Catholics for claiming to be the exclusive earthly representatives of the universal church, insisting that Baptists are also representatives of the spiritual church.¹⁰

Particular Baptists were even more emphatic on the doctrine of the universal church. From 1644 onwards their confessions, while stressing the particular church also, upheld the doctrine of the spiritual church. Presbyterians emphasized the universal church to the neglect of the particular; Congregationalists placed such emphasis on the particular church that they became known as "Independents"; Baptists insisted that the two views are complementary. Early in the 1640's Presbyterians attacked Baptists for naivete in holding both views, claiming that only one could be logically held; Baptists should decide which view is correct.¹¹ However, Baptists could not surrender either doctrine without rejecting Biblical evidence on the one hand or violating their own Christian experience on the other.

In addition to the terms "invisible church" and "universal church," the term "body of Christ" was also used by Baptists to denominate the spiritual church. Baptist leaders who had been trained in the universities for the official ministry of the Church of England (but who later adopted Baptist views) seemingly preferred to use the terms "invisible" and "universal." Untrained Baptists, whose religious training derived almost exclusively from the Scriptures, preferred the Biblical term "body of Christ."¹²

9. Thomas Grantham, *The Baptist Against the Papist*, 1663, p. 20.

10. S. A., *A Modest Reply . . .*, 1692, pp. 21-23.

11. Thomas Blake, *Infants Baptism*, 1645, p. 64; Thomas Bakewell, *An Answer or Confutation of Divers Errors . . .*, 1646, p. 4.

12. See illustrative material in: E. A. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire* (London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, Ltd., 1951), appendix I, pp. 147f; Kiffin, *A Sober Discourse . . .*, 1681, pp. 137f; *Baptist Quarterly*, new series, X (1940-41), 230; *Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, 1644-1720*, edited by E. B. Underhill (London: Haddon, Brothers, and Co., 1854), pp. 353f.

The confession of 1644 calls the particular congregation a "body," but these "particular bodies" (the seven churches who issued the confession) are distinct only for expediency's sake. They are "all one in Communion, holding Jesus Christ to be our head and Lord."¹³ Berkshire Baptists made complete use of the figure "Body of Christ," and it became the basis of their associational organization in October, 1652:

there is the same relation betwixt particular Churches each towards other, as there is betwixt particular members of on [one] Church for the Churches of Christ doe all make up but on [one] body or Church in general under Christ their head. . . . particular members make up on [one] particular Church under ye same head, Christ, and all the particular assemblies are but on [one] mount Zion. . . . in his body there is to be no schisme, which is . . . found in yt [that] body when all the members have not the same care on [one] over another.¹⁴

The doctrine of the spiritual church provided the doctrinal basis of connectionalism. Baptists exercised certain informal relationships between churches, in keeping with their view of the spiritual church. These informal relationships (involving scattered congregations, benevolence, church constitution and ordination, and cooperative discipline) contributed to the development of formal associationism.

During the early years, and particularly during persecution, Baptist churches were divided into congregations which met separately for causes of distance and security. At appointed intervals they came together for discipline and communion services. When conditions permitted, these scattered congregations became distinct churches. They had formerly been parts of the same church; they now sought through associational life the religious benefits which they had formerly received as scattered congregations of the same church.¹⁵

Churches assisted each other by extending benevolent

13. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

14. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire*, loc. cit.

15. See Hugh Wamble, *The Concept and Practice of Christian Fellowship . . . Among Seventeenth Century English Baptists* (an unpublished doctoral dissertation, Louisville: Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1955), pp. 252-273.

help to needy members. Because General Baptists were less in agreement with other religious groups, and therefore had greater need for mutual care, they were more thoroughgoing in benevolence than Particular Baptists. The Midlands confession of 1651 encouraged the churches to assist persons, especially those of the "household of Faith," who "through sickness or weakness cannot labour," and who are, therefore, destitute of food and clothing.¹⁶

In repudiating the system of National Church benevolence which was supported by compulsory tithes, General Baptists drafted an article for their Standard Confession of 1660 which (1) makes the local congregation the executor of benevolence and (2) approves "free and voluntary contribution" as the proper method of support.¹⁷ According to the Orthodox Creed of 1679 the only two factors which determine the extent of benevolence are (1) a brother's need and (2) "our ability in freedom, liberality, and charity" to fill the need: Behind the practice of benevolence is the ideal of the "body of Christ"; the confession cites I Corinthians 12:26 as the basis of such aid: "If one member suffer, all are pained with it."¹⁸

The practice of General Baptists was so sacrificial that they soon became victims of defrauders. Within a few years, therefore, churches and associations were forced to adopt methods designed to certify the worthiness of a person who requested aid. In 1652 the Fenstanton church noted that "many persons have made a trade of going from place to place to seek relief." To counter this abuse the church ruled that each applicant must provide conclusive information about his need and fulfill three requirements: (1) all lawful means of subsistence must be exhausted before he requests aid; (2) attempts must have first been made to secure aid from relatives and the local congregation of which he is a member; and (3) he must produce authentic evidence that his home church cannot provide adequate help and therefore officially requests aid from sister churches; the church should appoint someone to make the request of sister church-

16. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-107.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 117f.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 150f.

es; the needy person should not be permitted to itinerate in his own interest.¹⁹

In 1656 the General Assembly of General Baptists discussed the matter of benevolence. It was recognized that (1) "many have deceivingly gone up and downe Requiering Contributions in their own behalfe," (2) one increases his own need when he itinerates for his own cause (for he cannot labor while he is travelling), and (3) industry and thrift would prevent poverty and the need for benevolence. Nevertheless, the Assembly adopted a rule which was recommended to all churches:

... when any Member of a Congregation shall be in want Judged by them to be an object of pitty and themselves not able without some great and more than ordinary disinableing of them selves to communicate [share] to his want that they then shall send a suffisient testimony thereof to ye next Congregation that is to say by a Messenger appointed for that purpose that is known to the next Congregation except there may be a letter genl [general] subscribed with such hands wch [which] may be certainly known to that congregation and so that Congregation to ye next and so to as many as that Congregation to whom ye pson [person] in want belongs vnto shal think fitt in which time ye pson in want may follow his occasions and not bring himself in greater extremity by his going up and down neglecting his calling [job].²⁰

Particular Baptists were less concerned about benevolence, but it was also practiced by them. The confession of 1644 is silent on benevolence, though it is implied in the article on the inter-dependence of churches; churches are to "help one another in all needful affaires of the Church, as members of one body . . ." ²¹ The revision of 1646 intentionally and specifically corrects the silence of 1644 by enjoining mutual care, "that the name of Jesus . . . Christ may not be blasphemed through the necessity [need] of any in the church."²² The Somerset confession of 1656, while recog-

19. *Records of the Churches of Christ, Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, 1644-1720*, p. 17.

20. *Minutes of the General Assembly*, edited by W. T. Whitley (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1909), I, 8.

21. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 186f.

22. E. B. Underhill, editor, *Confessions of Faith* (London: Had-don, Brothers, and Co., 1854), p. 40.

nizing the abuse of benevolence, states that extra-local charity, as well as local benevolence, is a duty incumbent on churches.²³ Extra-local benevolence was variously approved and encouraged by other Particular Baptist confessions.²⁴

The practice of extra-local benevolence served to strengthen the ties between churches. As the century progressed, however, several factors caused the practice to decline. First, the abuse of benevolence made the practice suspect. Secondly, the persecutions which followed the Restoration of Charles II impoverished most Baptists, rendering them incapable of giving aid. Thirdly, after the Toleration Act of 1689 many churches became so involved in building and paying for meeting-houses that the practice of benevolence, whether local or extra-local, declined sharply.²⁵ To be sure, there were cases of extra-local benevolence after this time, but the recipients of such aid were usually ministers who were well known in a certain region.

Churches were also closely related to each other through the constitution of new churches and the ordination of officers. Originally, new churches were the products of the missionary efforts of a preaching disciple; there was close contact between the new congregation and the church which sent out the preaching disciple. Because of disruption by Quakers and others, churches soon began to exercise strict care in certifying preaching disciples; they also reserved certain powers, including the power to constitute new churches. When remote members or new converts desired to form themselves into a new church, they requested an existing church (or churches) to constitute them.

The theory of congregational authority made outside assistance in ordination irrelevant during the first generation of Baptist life; each congregation, exercising the power

23. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 209f.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 268f; William Mitchell, *Jachin and Boaz*, 1707, in *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, III (1912-13), 159; *Articles of the Christian Faith*, 1704, art. 35, broadsheet.

25. In 1693 the Wantage church appealed to the Broadmead church, Bristol, for aid to a Wantage member whose house had burned. Wantage gave as its reason for the request: "we have been concerned lately to buy a Meeting House and a Burying place which hath cost us three hundred pounds and upwards and things lie hard upon us, otherwise our charity had been more fully extended to him" (*Baptist Quarterly*, XI [1940-41], 223).

which inheres in a local body, ordained its own officers without outside help. As denominationalism developed and ministers became older and more conservative, the power of ordination came to rest in affiliated churches. Ministers became the practical executors of this power; in fact, they progressively claimed, it seems, an exclusive right in recognizing, examining, approving, and installing new ministers.²⁶ As associational life became more prominent, the associations assumed control over ordination.

When local churches could not resolve disciplinary problems locally, they requested the aid of sister churches or referred their problems to an association. Usually, the local church was able to resolve its moral problems; in a few cases, however, it was necessary to secure outside arbitration in disciplining ministers on moral grounds.²⁷

Problems involving doctrine and polity were more difficult to resolve locally, so outside assistance was frequently requested. Due to their basic agreement in faith and order, Particular Baptists seldom had to resort to cooperative discipline. General Baptists, however, were not so fortunate; they intentionally promoted an ambiguous theology, but their literalism of Biblical interpretation and fanatical temperament turned theological ambiguity into a curse. Their great diversity presented numerous occasions of controversy, and their inability to handle differences locally forced them to seek outside help; in several notable cases, division resulted.

Formal associational life was established during the 1650's. Prior to that time there were several unions of Baptists along indefinite lines, seemingly of an informal and occasional nature. During the 1650's, however, associationalism developed very rapidly among Baptists. Most of the associations were regional in scope. Before 1660 General Baptists had associations in the Midlands, Cambridgeshire region, and Kent; Particular Baptists had regional connec-

26. Compare the development of non-local ordination in Bristol and Western England: *The Records of a Church of Christ, meeting in Broadmead, Bristol. 1640-1687*, edited by E. B. Underhill (London: J. Haddon, 1847), pp. 91, 358-360, 369-383; *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, I (1908-09), 59.

27. See Wamble, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-301, for evidence.

tions in London, Wales, West Anglia, Berkshire, Ireland, West Midlands, and Bedfordshire.

Associationalism served functional purposes, but always in a way consistent with the Baptist doctrine of the church. W. T. Whitley has suggested that the concept and example of associationalism came in 1653 from Irish Baptists (transplanted Englishmen) who had been influenced by the pattern of the Eastern Association in Cromwell's military organization.²⁹ However, three factors disfavor this view. First, the literature³⁰ on which this theory is based provides only scant evidence, and a study of the Baptist literature reveals: (1) the Irish churches were not closely connected; (2) they were united, not by an associational organization, but by concerted and simultaneous prayer meetings which they recommended to the English churches; (3) it was the Londoners who added the new feature about the use of inter-church correspondence as a means of determining which churches were in fellowship as Particular Baptists; and (4) the leader in the Irish connection was Thomas Patient, and he had participated in the united effort of London Baptists in 1644 and 1646.

Secondly, the Irish experiment of 1653 was not the initial associational experiment among Baptists. Five General Baptist churches possessed an uncertain connection in 1626.³¹ London Particular Baptist churches were associated together as early as 1644.³² Welsh congregations met in concert as early as November, 1650, and had a continuous

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-341.

29. *Baptist Quarterly*, new series, I (1922-23), 280; VII (1934-35), 216; *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, V (1916-17), 19f; *A History of British Baptists*, second revised edition (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1932), pp. 90f. Because of his knowledge of Baptist antiquities, Whitley's view has received wide acceptance. It should be noted, however, that Whitley also affirms that the military associational pattern was not the exclusive influence on Baptists.

30. Cf. *An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons . . .*, For the maintenance and pay of the Garrisons . . . in the Eastern Association . . . , September 4, 1645, 15p.; *Rippon's Baptist Annual Register*, IV (1801-02), supplement, 13-20.

31. Benjamin Evans, *The Early English Baptists* (London: J. Heaton and Son, 1862), II, 21-51; Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research* (1550-1641) (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1912), II, 222-257; *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, IV (1914-15), 229-252.

32. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-189.

life until 1656.³³ Thirty General Baptist congregations united in drafting a confession in 1651. There was some kind of formal connection of Particular Baptist churches in West Anglia as early as 1650 or 1651.³⁴ The Berkshire Association fully defined the designs of associational life at Tetsworth in October, 1652.³⁵

Thirdly, during the 1650's Baptists did not designate their cooperative life by the term "association." The preferred terms were "general meetings," "meetings," and "assembly." The term "association," it seems, did not become popular until after 1689.

There were five major causative factors in the development of associationalism.³⁶ First, early General Baptists were forced to find security and fellowship in their small community of about one hundred and fifty members; they were theologically opposed to Calvinism and ecclesiologically withdrawn from Anglicanism, Puritanism, and Separatism.

Secondly, the London Particular Baptists united in order to issue a joint confession in 1644 specifically for the purpose of demonstrating their theological orthodoxy, political innocence, and moral purity. Thus, their first experiment in cooperation was due to the necessity of defending themselves against the charges of heresy, sedition, and licentiousness.

Thirdly, associationalism arose during the 1650's as a preservative of unity and an antidote to certain disruptive forces. Quakerism with its religious individualism and Fifth Monarchism with its political incendiarism threatened the entire Baptist movement. Many of the early joint meetings dealt with Quakerism and Fifth Monarchism. They also dealt with specific internal matters which were disturbing the churches: lack of ministerial supplies, need and abuse of benevolence, mixed marriages, controversies over singing, theology, communion, laying on of hands on all

33. Joshua Thomas, *A History of the Baptist Association in Wales*, 1795, in *Rippon's Baptist Annual Register*, IV (1801-02), supplement, pp. 6-16.

34. Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists* (London: Burditt, Button, Hamilton, Baynes, and Gale and Curtis, and others, 1811-1830), IV, 257.

35. See Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire*, loc. cit., for the primary source.

36. For a study, see Wamble, *op. cit.*, pp. 313-323.

baptized believers, etc. Both General and Particular Baptists tried to fix the limits of their associations by specifying their views, both theologically and ecclesiologically; experience had demonstrated to them that satisfactory associationalism is improbable without basic agreement in these areas.

Fourthly, the propagation of Baptist views was a stated objective of some associational meetings. At first, General Baptists emphasized this rather strongly, but as they isolated themselves from the world they permitted mission work to decline; isolationism and exclusivism strangled missionary efforts. Particular Baptists, on the other hand, inaugurated an ambitious program in 1689; it included the education of young ministers, supplying of needy churches, providing assistance to needy ministers, etc. Within a few years, however, they too lost their missionary zeal; the crystallization of a hypercalvinistic view of grace destroyed the basis of evangelical preaching. It is unfortunate that both General and Particular Baptists were becoming disinterested in missionary work by 1700.

Fifthly, the rapid growth of Baptists required the setting up of some form of connectional life in order to maintain fellowship between churches through information, assistance, and cooperation. It is fortunate that Baptists associated as early as they did; otherwise, there would have been limited relations between local churches. When meeting-houses were erected after 1689 Baptists tended to limit fellowship to the local church; they lost their mobility. Associations became the only sponsor of fellowship. Even this fellowship was defective, for ministers came to dominate the associations, thereby weakening inter-church relations.

It was inevitable for Baptists to raise a question concerning the authority of an association. The very fact that Baptists began to associate is evidence that they rejected congregational isolationism. When they associated they raised the question of the relationship between the local church and the association. As they understood the relationship, it was an interdependence which required neither institutional unity nor minute doctrinal uniformity, neither associational domination nor local church autonomy.

General Baptists were considerably agitated because

some wanted to give the association a degree of authority over local churches in the settlement of difficulties. The association became an arbiter of local church problems, but as the General Assembly grew in influence it became the arbiter; regional associations became mere referral agencies.

The confession of 1679 contains a bold statement of associational authority³⁷ which was generally rejected in theory, though sometimes observed in practice. Appealing to the Jerusalem conference in A. D. 49 (Acts 15), Thomas Grantham objected in 1678 to the principle of associational authority:

But considering the matter as a common cause, and as all Churches are but one Mystical Body, and though equally entire Communities in themselves, yet have an Interest in the Gifts of each other, no one being able to say to the rest, I have no need of thee.

This mutual Consultation therefore of many Churches together, shews not the Superiority of Churches one above another; but only the Brotherly Interest which they have in the Strength of each other, and the Duty which lieth upon the Churches one to help another in their difficulties. And doubtless her Strength thus united, is the most powerful Means under Heaven, (through the virtue of Christ's Promise to be with them as his Church) to stop the Current of Heresie, and to keep the Churches in unity, both in Doctrine and Manners, as appears in the Result of this Sacred Assembly [Jerusalem], and the Effect which followed thereupon. And sith [since] we read but of one Assembly so general as this in the Apostles days, it may teach us they are not to be conven'd but upon emergent occasion, or when lower endeavors fail to effect the Peace of the Churches.³⁸

When the General Baptists met in their assembly in 1689, they debated the power of "Generall Conventions" and resolved that no control over local churches is intended. Necessity and agreement, it was stated, are adequate reasons for cooperative action.³⁹

37. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

38. Thomas Grantham, *Christianismus Primitivus*, 1678, II 137; cf. Richard Knight, *H. story of the General or Six Principle Baptists in Europe and America* (Providence: Smith and Parmenter, Printers, 1827), p. 120.

39. *Minutes of the General Assembly*, I, 26.

When the General Association split off from the General Assembly in 1696, the Association soon attempted to enforce the principle affirmed in the confession of 1679. The Deptford church defected from the Association; the church agreed

to continue members of that Assembly [Association], provided it be agreed by them that they only Meet to confer and advise for the promotion of the Gospell and ye good of the whole, but not to make Laws obliging particular Churches thereby . . . , which we think is divesting [divesting] such Churches of the power given them by Christ, and renders them vncaple [incapable] to manage their own affairs.⁴⁰

Particular Baptists never elevated the association over the churches. They consistently and emphatically renounced associational authority over local churches. The confession of 1677 states that the assembled messengers

are not entrusted with any Church-power properly so called; or with any jurisdiction over the Churches themselves, to exercise any censures either over any Churches, or persons; or to impose their determination on the Churches, or Officers.⁴¹

When the General Assembly of Particular Baptists met in London in September, 1689, the first issue which was resolved was the question of associational authority. The first rule states:

we disclaim all manner of *superiority* and *superintendency* over the churches, and that we have no *authority* or *power* to prescribe or impose any thing upon the faith or practice of any of the churches of Christ. Our whole intendment is to be helpers together of one another, by way of counsel and advice.⁴²

Particular Baptists realized that it is not enough merely to affirm that an association has no control over a local church. Therefore, they early sought means to carry out the theory. The Berkshire churches agreed that their terms

40. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

41. McGlothlin, *op. cit.*, p. 268; Mitchill, *op. cit.*, in *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, III (1912-13), 173.

of associationalism were not binding on any church until the church first ratified them.⁴³

The General Assembly of Particular Baptists in 1689 defined several procedural rules and foundational principles, designed to protect their first rule:

2. That in those things wherein one church differs from another church in their principles or practices, in point of communion [a reference to the controversy over open and closed communion], that we cannot, shall not impose upon any particular church therein, but leave every church to their own liberty to walk together as they have received from the Lord.

3. That if any particular offence doth arise betwixt one church and another, or betwixt one particular person and another, no offence shall be admitted to be debated among us, till the rule Christ hath given [Matt. 18:15-17], in this matter, be first answered, and the consent of both parties had, or sufficiently endeavored.

4. That whatever is determined by us in any case, shall not be binding on any one church, till the consent of that church be first had, and they conclude the same among themselves.

5. That all things we offer by way of counsel and advice, be proved out of the Word of God, and the Scriptures annexed.

6. That the breviates of this meeting be transcribed, and sent to every particular church with a letter.

7. That the Messengers that come to this meeting, be recommended by a letter from the church (to which they belong), and that none be permitted to speak in this assembly, unless by general consent.⁴⁴

This Particular Baptist concept of associationalism was transferred to America where, through the influence of the Philadelphia Association (organized 1707), it found ready acceptance in the middle and southern colonies. The "independence" of Separate or New Light Baptist churches in New England prevented immediate acceptance; in fact, as-

42. Rippon's *Baptist Annual Register*, IV (1801-02), supplement, p. 48.

43. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire*, loc. cit.

44. Rippon's *Baptist Annual Register*, IV (1801-02), supplement, pp. 48f.

sociationalism was viewed with grave suspicions; in time, however, associationalism was also established in New England.

On September 19, 1749, "an essay on the power and duty of an Association of churches, was proposed" to the Philadelphia Association.⁴⁵ It begins by defining the power of the local congregation:

That an Association is not a superior judicature, having such superior power over the churches concerned; but that each particular church hath a complete power and authority from Jesus Christ, to administer all gospel ordinances, . . . to receive in and cast out, . . . to try and ordain their own officers, and to exercise every part of the gospel discipline and church government, independent of any other church or assembly whatever.

However,

several such independent churches, where Providence gives them their situation convenient, may, and ought, for their mutual strength, counsel, and other valuable advantages, by their voluntary and free consent, to enter into an agreement and confederation, . . .

Such churches there must be agreeing in doctrine and practice, and independent in their authority and church power, before they can enter into a confederation, . . . and choose delegates or representatives, to associate together.

Associational superiority is again repudiated, but, it is stated,

though no power can regularly arise above its fountain from where it rises, yet we are of opinion, that an Association of the delegates of associate churches have a very considerable power in their hands, respecting those churches in their confederation; for if the agreement of several distinct churches, in sound doctrine and regular practice, be the first motive, ground, and foundation or basis of their confederation, then it must naturally follow, that a defection in doctrine or practice in any church, in such confederation, or any party in any such church, is ground sufficient for an Association to withdraw from such a church or party. . . .

45. See *Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association* (1707-1807), edited by A. D. Gillette (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1851), pp. 60ff, for the text of the "Essay."

This exclusion rests on the "voluntary confederation" and is "merely negative." The association simply withdraws fellowship from the defective church or party; "excommunicate they cannot, there being no institution to authorize them so to do." The association, according to the essay, serves on a larger scale the same ends which a local congregation serves on a limited scale.

During the seventeenth century, Baptist churches became strongly connectional, being formally related to each other. However, they refused to be open connectionalists. They held that agreement in faith and polity is essential to healthy asociationalism. The only exception to this was the experiment in "open communion," which was a compromise between Particular Baptists and Congregationalists within a few churches. General Baptists did not associate with Particular Baptists, and Baptists denied formal connections with Paedo-baptists. In this respect, English Baptists of the seventeenth century were stubbornly sectarian.⁴⁶

46. The sectarianism of early English Baptists, especially as it relates to unionism and uniformity, will be discussed in a future article.

Preaching As a Radical Transaction

BY PAUL SCHERER

Three indictments are commonly brought against the Gospel. To some it is incredible; to others, it is irrelevant; to still others, it is too "easy," too "cheap." The first two charges were examined in the last lecture [See *The Review and Expositor*, LIV, iii (July, 1957), 355-376]. Now I want to examine the third indictment—that the Gospel as often preached is too "cheap," too "easy" to be true.

Let me begin by submitting to you that because of its misconceptions of what the Gospel is and what the Gospel is for, the Christian pulpit in America has been busy reducing the cost both of the Christian faith and of the Christian life. What God did cost him all he had; one reads nowhere in the New Testament that the cost for us has been marked down to "Little drops of water, little grains of sand," on the ground that they "Make the mighty ocean, and the beautiful land!" Or to "Little acts of kindness, little deeds of love," on the ground that they will no doubt "make this earth a heaven, like the heaven above!"

I should like to tell you a story I heard as the conclusion of a sermon on that magnificent text in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The whole thing was chock-full of good advice about human brotherhood and the relief of the destitute. I had nothing against it, except to wonder how we were all going to get that way. But it came to its climax in a dream which a famous Scottish minister said he had had. He had died, and stood now before St. Peter. "What's your name?" asked the saint. The Scottish minister was a little surprised at such laxness in heaven, especially as he had been very well known indeed on earth. But he answered, "Ian Mc-Alpin," or whatever it was. "And what did you do?" inquired the keeper of the gates. It was a little too much. "Do ye mean to say ye have never heard of my ministry at St. Cuthbert's in Edinburgh, Scotland, and how the students of the University thronged our Sunday services?" "No," said Peter, "no word of that has come to us here." "Ye know nothing either of my pastoral work then, how I was called

to London by a serving-girl who was dying, and sat by her side all the night through?" "No," answered Peter, and shook his head, making no motion to open the gate. It was fantastic, such book-keeping! And Ian McAlpin turned sadly away. When suddenly the old fisherman called out, "Wait a minute. Are you the chap who used to feed the sparrows on Princes Street? It was Ian Mc Something or other." And the preacher looked back bewildered, nodding, but saying nothing. "Then come right in," shouted the saint. "The Lord of the sparrows wants to thank you!" That's what it came to—that tremendous pageant on the last great day, with the nations gathered, and the multitude on the right hand not knowing why they were there, and the multitude on the left, knowing as little why they were there! The preacher drew a line under all that, and added it up, and the sum total was "Be good to sparrows week!" That's why men think the Gospel is cheap. You can have it for nothing, and that's more than it's worth!

If we want to be provided with some decent safeguard to keep us from whittling it down to that fine point, that is—if preaching for us is to become a radical transaction, we have to take serious account of the conflicts which the Gospel provokes, of the claims with which it confronts us, and of whatever possibilities there are on our part of creative response. There are three major convictions which I would suggest to you we shall have to formulate and hold on to: 1) the Gospel comes to us not as history, but in a very real sense as conflict; that it 2) comes to us not just as succor, but as the demand which is succor, and the succor which is demand; and that it comes to us 3) not as a refuge, or as an invitation to patient reliance upon God, but as a summons to ceaseless participation in his eternal redemptive purpose.

The Gospel Not As History But As Conflict

First, then, the Gospel comes not as history, but as conflict. Hence I insist that the preacher is not pointing to something back there so that his people might apply it up here! The Bible is his book, not because it's the story of what once took place, but because precisely in it and through it and by way of it that very thing takes place now. The man in the pulpit isn't an equal sign, between the past and the present. He isn't holding David with one hand and

some deacon with the other, pulling on them with all his might, trying to get them to meet for God's sake and the deacon's so that something might come alive, like Jairus' daughter! I have heard whole sermons given over to that technique: John in prison was bewildered, so are we; He inquired directly of Jesus, "Art thou he that should come?" So must we. He got an indirect answer, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see"; so do we. You could fairly see everybody's mind moving, like the heads of a crowd at a tennis match!

Of course you have to reconstitute the scene as vividly as you can; but you have to see what is said in the Bible as the living Word of God that keeps speaking, reminding yourself every step of the way, as you begin and as you continue, that the biblical situation is our situation. I want to repeat this: the biblical situation is our situation! The relation between the past and the present is always a dialectical relation; and you can throw in the future as well if you like. We are dealing with a vast kaleidoscope: events in history that transcend history, and in such fashion as that only when the sermon is "authentically biblical" can it be "really relevant," and only when it is "vitally relevant" can it be "really biblical." That's how John Knox puts it in his little book, *The Integrity of Preaching*, which I would commend to you as one of the most skillful and timely studies I have seen of the nature and the hazards of the preacher's task. To be sure, the Word addresses itself to particular people at particular times in particular situations, and we dare not lose sight of that particularity. But the particularity in any given case is, for our purpose, perhaps more contingent than essential. It matters comparatively little that Paul was writing in Romans to a Jewish-Christian congregation during the early years of the second half of the first century. The most striking feature of it is its strange contemporaneousness. And it's the sense of that contemporaneousness which has so largely disappeared from both pulpit and pew.

Ours for the most part are linear and horizontal minds: with the result that every time the Bible is read in their hearing, people find themselves thoroughly obsessed either with some distant future, like the end of the world, which

isn't due yet, so why worry about it—or with some distant past, and that was a long time ago, and it's all finished now, so why worry about that? None of it seems to be happening where they are! If you can't project things in front of you, and so postpone coming to grips with God, why not chuck them behind you, and think of them as a record, well aware of how easy it is to work out a peaceful coexistence with almost any record! Whole paragraphs in the Bible begin with some such words as "And it came to pass in those days." Like a fairy-story: "Once upon a time . . ." And from that moment on nobody is likely to be upset! Because Christianity is rooted in history, let's bury it there and set about the day's business!

In Shakespeare there is no such childish bogging down in history. Examine Macbeth, and Hamlet, and Othello, and Lear: they don't even live across the street or down the block or around the corner; they live at your house, the whole motley crew of them! Why? Simply because Shakespeare took it for granted that they did. That's why you sit on the edge of your chair, with your eyes glued to the stage. While we forget that Christianity is a drama! It does indeed have its roots in "Once upon a time." You can't tear it out of the centuries. It's embedded in them, far down, every step of the way. But you can't bury it in them! Men have borne their witness to it across the generations, and God takes their witness up in his hands and makes of it a living Word. But you and I have no earthly chance of hearing it if we insist, at the first sound of it, on running back where it started and pitching our tents there!

Precisely in its contemporaneity does the Christ Gospel begin to lose some of its innocuous and almost legendary character: to become both an offense—I have suggested that we may never even hear it until it does!—and a demand—of that I shall speak later. In one of von Schlegel's plays the curtain rises to show the inside of a theater where people are waiting for the curtain to rise. When it does, another such scene is disclosed, with still another curtain. When that happens a third time, the original audience grows uneasy and looks around to see if perhaps it too is on a stage! So it is always, both in the Old Testament and in the New. **The Jews died of the history and the tra-**

dition which their "religion" had become. What shall we die of? "*Maranatha*—Come, Lord Jesus!" A man's a fool to say that if all he wants is to go on as he is! When that "wretched infant" does come, he sends you out on this most disappointing of all the quests in which humanity has ever been engaged—and the most exhilarating! He shows you that self of yours, until you can hardly stand to live with you, and when you are willing to start somewhere else, as the wise men started toward the star he'll talk to you about peace and joy and hope: the peace of sin forgiven, and you'll still sin; the joy of being forever uneasy, because he has taught you to care, and nothing anywhere is as he'd like it to be; and hope enough only to throw up your head no matter what happens, and try to sing with St. Francis some *Canticle of the Sun*

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing
Alleluia!

That may help to show you what I mean when I say that the moment we begin to prepare a sermon our concern is with a past that stands around so strangely still in the present. P. T. Forsyth's style may not fit your pulpit; but listen to him: "I read the story of the father who beseeches Christ to heal his son. I hear the answer of the Lord, 'I will come and heal him.' 'Him'! That means me. The words are life to my distempered soul. I care little for them (when I need them most) as a historic incident of the long past, an element in the discussion of miracles. They do not serve their divinest purpose 'till they come to me as they come to that father. They come with a promise here and now. I see the heavens open, and the Redeemer at the Right Hand of God. I hear a great voice from heaven and these words are the words of the Saviour Himself to me, 'I will come down and heal him'. And upon them He rises from His eternal throne, He takes His way through a ready lane of angels, archangels, the high heavenly host and the glorious fellowship of the saints. Thy part at His coming, for they know where He would go. These congenial souls do not keep Him, and these native scenes do not detain Him. But on the wings of that word He moves from the midst of complete obedience, spiritual love, holy intelligence, ceaseless worship and per-

fect praise. He is restless amid all that in search of me — me sick, falling, lost, despicable, desperate. He comes, He finds, He heals me on the wings of these words.” (*Christian Worship*, Micklem, 220 f). It could be done less oratorically, and with fewer words. Nor should I advise resorting to it in every sermon. But it sees the Gospel as drama, as meeting, and as present. That much we are to keep in the front of our minds when we preach. And when we do, that Gospel, because it no longer comes to us as history, will begin to come as conflict.

The Gospel Not As Succor But As Demand

I say the Gospel comes not just as history but as conflict; and it comes not just as succor, but also as demand. There's the second major conviction which we shall have to formulate and hold on to through the thick and thin of our preaching, if we want to help safeguard the Christian Gospel against the charge that it's cheap, far too easy to be true. Certainly it comes to us as succor, and we are never to lose sight of that; but the succor and the demand are altogether inseparable. The one both implies and presupposes the other. There are times when I am almost persuaded that in the sermon the demand which is the succor must be given priority. Partly because the emphasis is all too often the other way around, and partly because all through the Bible and human experience there are, if I may put it this way, such obvious limitations on the help God can give a man. So much so that multitudes think of him, if they think of him at all, as loveless power. Job did, and it filled him with bitterness and resentment. How is it with anybody when disaster strikes, disease, famine, war, death — sometimes a very debauch evil? And we try to read the crazy riddle, and we can't. We pray, and nothing happens. There's nobody anywhere who cares enough to do anything about it. God could, if he would! Or is it that he would if he could? Maybe it's not loveless power but powerless love we're dealing with! What was it the scribes and elders said as they stood wagging their heads at the foot of the cross? “If thou be the Son of God, come down!” “He saved others, himself he cannot save!” Are there things that love can't do without ceasing to be love? Are there places in the human heart where power cannot enter, only weakness can get in?

Perhaps that's why the Gospel has so little to say about what we're supposed to get out of it! Perhaps when you get what you want, you've already had your reward. Jesus said that one day about the Pharisees who wanted a reputation for holiness, and wore their piety where it would show! What if the answer were that we are dealing with a power which is in love with us, and so, because it's love and power both, will not yield itself to our purposes, not the American foreign policy, or to the social welfare, or to anybody's private peace of mind? What if it were he demand of that Love which we need to hear, and the succor that could be allowed to take care of itself?

Suppose we turn to the Christmas Gospel and see how the moment it quits coming to us as history it begins coming as conflict, not so much as succor now but as demand. I'm going to ask you to recall with me here Auden's "Christmas Oratorio." Matthew says, "When Herod the king heard these things" — all about how another king was to be born — "he was troubled." We don't often bother much with that deep, discordant note at Christmas. We don't really like to have it interfere with the carols and the chimes. Yesterday I called it the "offense" of the Gospel. It's the conflict which the Gospel stirs and that belongs to the very pattern and texture of the music which Christmas makes! Berlioz, the French composer, heard the tumult, and wrote it down in jarring discords, for nervous wood-winds and deep base violins: the lonely nights, sleepless, or all disturbed with dreams; the tramp of armed guards on the bare, hard earth; the cries of women and children. Bruegel shows you on his canvas the sheer terror of it, as if it were all out there on the streets of his own little Flemish town, among the neighbors: the cruel, grinning faces of the soldiers; doors being battered in; running, stumbling figures, in the very midst of that slaughter of the innocents. If that strange world of God should come alive, what would we do? How ever can we get it out of the wrappings and the tinsel? That's the trouble God always has with Christians! He'd have no trouble with it if we had a little!

In Auden's poem, Herod sits on his throne bewildered. he has cleaned up his bit of a kingdom, and it looks quite safe now. "Soft drinks and sandwiches he says can be had

in the inn at reasonable prices." Truck-drivers are "no longer under the necessity of carrying guns." There is a heavy tax on ouija-boards and playing cards. But the common people won't come to their senses! That "wild prayer of longing" still rises from their hearts, day in and day out: "O God, . . . leave Thy heavens and come down to earth." Be our uncle. "Look after Baby, amuse Grandfather, escort Madam to the opera, help Willy with his home-work, introduce Muriel to a handsome naval officer." It's ridiculous. "If he did come, they'd have to kick Poetry downstairs . . . He'd expect every man . . . to be better than anybody could be! O Dear!" I don't want to be nasty. I'm a liberal, and I brush my teeth after every meal. Why couldn't this wretched infant be born somewhere else? You see. The present and the past have so far merged into one, the time element has to such an extent yielded its priority in favor of the content, that you cannot call Herod, Herod any longer. That "wretched infant" has come to disturb all of us! The angels, the carols, and shepherds; the inn, the mother, the little child: we are aware of the beauty; but if that beauty is the beauty of holiness, it demands something of us! But if it does, it's "out of this world," it's legend, it's myth seen enough in the pejorative sense of the word, it's a child's book of verse illustrated—until it lays its troublesome claim on me. And where does it do that? At the point of God's choice to become man, his preference for the commonplace and the humble, his self-manifestation in love that comes not as Lord but as servant, and so condemns me. If he had come as Lord, the Jews might have received him; they crucified him because he came as servant! That irks me. I know very well that such a God imposes upon me too the humble and the commonplace. But I'll draw the line at that if I can! And take it all out in distant and nostalgic moods: "Silent night, holy night!" I choose the kiss of peace, which is the kiss of death! Until one day this thing turns my world upside down, and I see I've got to do some crucifying too — or else — or else — God pity me, do I even want to be like him? "Oh to be more like Jesus," we used to sing, without the foggiest notion of what it meant. He is God's great reversal of all the facts about us — even of the good, which is so much worse than we thought, and the evil, far more desperate than we dreamed! He is God's con-

flict with us, says Bultmann (*Essays*, 136); inquiring of "every self-abasement and self-sacrifice which takes place in the name of religion" if it be not "in reality rebellion against God . . . a means of achieving one's own glory." He's the scandal of the Gospel, this Jesus. He asks too much!

Let's turn now to the Easter Gospel. What is Easter for? To comfort us all, and make of that last enemy a friend? It's the life-denying religions that think of death as a friend. Christianity is a life-affirming faith, as Judaism was before it, and knows death to be its enemy. Not much use covering it with flowers to make it look pretty; or having the chimes ring out, "The Indian Love Song" as in Evelyn Waugh's *The Beloved*, when the funeral procession enters the massive gates of Forest Lawn Cemetery in Los Angeles. It isn't the function of Easter to "make friends" with death. Nor is it the function of Easter to underscore the fact that we are immortal. That's a Greek notion. In the biblical faith, when we are dead, we are dead all over, so to speak! It's God who raises us into life again, by his own mighty act, even as he raised Jesus from the dead. There was an illustration once in an otherwise excellent sermon which represented death as a kind of swinging door at the end of life's corridor, and by so much was something less than Christian! A little girl, who always came from school through a grave-yard, even on dark winter evenings, was asked if she were never afraid. "Oh no," she answered, "Never! I'm going home, you see, and that's the shortest way!" Easter means that God is the God of life and death, and by his power establishes with him forever the fellowship of them that believe. Speculation, argument, proof—these are not central. Central to the Easter Gospel is the affirmation of true life at the expense of what we call life, which is itself a denial of life. Easter sets me in a world which is not self-contained, but open at both ends, and draughty, with the winds of eternity blowing through it. It insists that the world is too small for my loyalties. I want to be left comfortably alone in it, satisfied with its good hard sense, and its ways that I understand. I don't care to pick up the stuff from my world's counter, and take it away from the glare of the artificial lights, and bring it here, and look at it in front of an "empty tomb," with an angel at the door. I'd rather hold fast to my bargains without ever see-

ing how shoddy most of them are. Mark says that the women "went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they were afraid." Afraid of what? Afraid of death, or afraid of life? Easter opens up a vista that makes my world too small, and makes me too great! To turn all at once from that world of mine which has dwindled to a self that has grown dizzy at being a sudden giant calls for courage!

Easter makes our dimensions too big! Bigger than we want to be! If we'd start living as big as we are, we'd all be brave enough to love our fellow men without fear of being hurt. At the moment, says Eugene O'Neil in *Lazarus Laughed*, we just snicker meanly at our neighbors. If we should ever really get out under the sky, instead of hiding about, there would be a laughing away of self, which gives a man his right to live forever. But it isn't bigness we want. We flee from that. The Easter Gospel is a costly Gospel because it won't let us flee, and we have to do something about it. We have to accept it or reject it, and there will be a kind of suicide either way. Which kind do you want?

The Gospel Not As Refuge But As Creative Response

The third major conviction which I like to make explicit so that I can hold on to it while I'm writing a sermon is that the Gospel comes not primarily as refuge but as creative response. In his second letter to that quarreling little congregation at Corinth, Paul writes (6:1), "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." He understood that the religion which Jesus had taught and then become was essentially creative. These people were "called to be Saints." They weren't repairing a breach in the walls, or shoring up the foundations a bit, or patching the roof where the rain came in. Under God they had got their hands on the very substance of things hoped for; they were themselves in a way the evidence of things not seen!

There was no objection, no earthly objection, to anybody's using the Christian faith as a refuge. Never offer any apologies for it on that score. There are times when we need shelter, just as there are times when we need a roof: shelter from the mind's fear and the heart's anguish, from the sheer futility and ultimate despair of a godless world. But there's no hope for a man who goes on thinking

that's enough. You can't stand still and be safe by fighting off attack. A nation can't, an army can't, and a soul can't. We have learned that the secret of physical health doesn't lie in disinfectants and germicides. Unless we can manage to get out from behind the defenses we've built, we're done! Christianity is not first and foremost a shelter. Nor does it shape up very well as a race either! Though many a hymn calls it that, and the New Testament sometimes speaks of it so! We aren't just taking out after heaven, or saintliness of one sort or another: panting along in the wake of some duty we've got to discharge, all out of breath chasing down some privilege we're supposed to enjoy, clutching and stumbling every Sunday morning at eleven, and at eight p.m. too if we are desperate, after some power that may help us to adjust our lives to certain situations. Christianity is intended to create situations that weren't there before! It doesn't play second fiddle to any problem: it's the concert-meister! It's the conductor that sets the problems! It's the composer that writes the score!

The Gospel is designed to provide an outlet for the deepest urge of human life—the urge to make things! Artists have it. That's why those frescoes by Fra Angelico are there on the walls of San Lorenzo in Florence. Authors have it. God had it. In this of all things we are most God-like: and it's this that Christianity was intended to serve! It was the very savor of being to the men who wrote the New Testament. The joy that sings its way along through their pages didn't come of resisting temptation: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God"—I haven't picked as many pockets this week as I did last! And it didn't come of being good: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—I told the truth yesterday morning, and forgave an enemy in the afternoon, and wrapped up a CARE package at night! You just don't sing about any of that! You sing when you stand with God against some darkness or some void, and watch the light come! You sing when you're having a go where you are at shaping, by God's grace, some little bit of what God wills, as a potter shapes a vase. The Christian religion is essentially creative! With such an incomparably great thing as the grace of God involved in it, who can be satisfied to set it meagre tasks or reap from it scanty harvests? Proclaim

it so. To receive that grace in vain would be to harness the tides and turn not even a flutter-mill. It would be to garner the driving energies of all Creation, that hold the sun and the moon in space, that push up out of the hard earth the green of spring, like an army with banners—to garner them one by one, only to be stopped by some silly thing that keeps standing in the road with arms akimbo, grinning at us, making lewd gestures, holding us cowed. Paul wasn't afraid that God would waste anything; he was afraid that people would waste God!

I like the story of the little girl at the week-end party whom Burne-Jones found one morning in such deep distress, and asked her what was the matter. "Somebody," she moaned, pointing to the bushes that lined the garden path, and brushing the tears from her eyes, "Somebody has gone and set traps out there for the birds." "And what have you done about it?" asked the artist, stroking her hair. "I've prayed about it," she answered. "I've prayed that the birds wouldn't go near the traps!" Then a long pause, and a sob. "And I've prayed that if they did, the traps wouldn't work!" Another long pause, and another sob, though not so bitter now. "And just a few minutes ago," she went on, looking up at him through her tears, and smiling a little, "I went out there in the bushes and kicked the traps to pieces!" The grace of God in our hands, and we talk of some folly of our own devising, it may be, as if it were the issue of a bewildering and cruel fate: we can't heft it an inch! A faith that subdued kingdoms and stopped the mouths of lions and quenched the violence of fire—come to that! There is much about us that calls for God's mercy. Is there anything about us, and about the life we are living, that calls for God's power! To preach is to raise that question, bringing all who hear to assume a grace in God which makes it impossible that his will for their lives should be defeated except by their own will to have it so!

Take for example that great promise in the forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah, the twenty-second and twenty-third verses, "Thus saith the Lord God, . . . they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." Let's inquire into what a sermon on it, from this point of view, would have to be saying. Something undoubtedly, about how disturbing a word that word "wait"

really is. In the Bible the "waiting" is not what we think! In Hebrew you are not thinking of either escapism or stoic fortitude, the kind that just grins and bears what it can't change. Incidentally, it's the same with the word "patience" in the New Testament. The word "wait" in Hebrew wants you to see a man stretched out and straining between his having and his not-having, his knowing and his not-knowing. That's what I mean when I speak not of refuge, but of creative response.

The "waiting" and the "hoping" of Scripture, every bit of its "patience," these probe into the mysteries of God's dealing with the eye of faith, looking where he never looked before, in everything that goes as he wants it to go, and in everything that doesn't, in tasks he is sure are beneath him, among people he never paid much attention to! Sure of this one thing only, that your search for God is always out around the circumference somewhere, in constant danger of being distorted into idolatry, as Paul Lehmann puts it, while it's his search for us that's central, with the waiting on our part that strains toward it, every muscle taut, like that man's there on the cross!

After that, and only after that, can you come to the promise! Lest all we arrive at be a sentimentality which is nothing more than "premature sanctification"! And it's no puny promise! "Thus saith the Lord God, . . . they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." It doesn't say you won't be lonely any more. You may begin to wonder why you're lonely, with so many people about—and that will be something! It doesn't mean that all at once you will feel needed again, and life will suddenly be full and satisfying. You may begin to wonder why you have felt so un-needed, with as much need as there is at no more than arm's length from where you're sitting—and that will be something! When the Bible talks about being ashamed, it's thinking of Adam, and what it was that made him hide there in the garden, as the Lord God kept calling, "Adam, Adam, where are you?" To be free of that—free of the past and open to the future, in a world where nothing is yours, but you are Christ's, and Christ is God's, and so life and death, and things present, and things to come, all are yours! It sounds like rhetoric, but it's Paul's rhetoric: and five times he turned it into

prose, with forty stripes save one; three times when he was beaten with rods, once when he was stoned, three times in shipwreck, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness. Poetry for us, God pity us! Prose for him! A pageant in overalls!—And it means, that promise, that you need never be driven off, either, in headlong flight from the odds; that there isn't anything we can't face up to now and whip it to a standstill on its own ground! The Christ who built his Church on the marsh-lands of a life he called a Rock, and said that even Hell wouldn't be able to hold out against it, then proceeded to write its vast epic, this mottled, struggling company of his would-be kingdom, into the text of human history, and write it large for him who runs to read—that Christ isn't likely to find beyond him quite the odds which happen at the moment to be staring you out of countenance! "They that wait for me." It's never easy at any time to make out what God is doing anywhere. Where would you have liked to live, and when, just to be sure? When Christ stood before Pilate? When Paul died outside of Rome? When Augustine lived and watched the Empire crumble? When the Reformation cracked Christendom wide open? God only knows how it's going to turn out. But beyond his knowing, and the willing that brings it to pass, what more do we want?

The Purpose of the World Council of Churches

BY KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE

The World Council of Churches is a stage in a thrilling adventure. It is an attempt in a fresh way to give effect to the petition in the high priestly prayer in John xvii:21: "that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." It arises from a dream of "unity and mission," of Christians coming together in obedience to the "new commandment" to "love one another" as the Savior loved the disciples (John xiii:34), in the common task of world evangelism.

From the first century Christians have been seeking to answer that prayer. They have conceived of unity as being through a church which would embrace in visible form under one inclusive structure all who call themselves Christians. That has resulted in a number of ecclesiastical bodies of which the largest is the Roman Catholic Church. However, none of these has succeeded in drawing into its fold all who bear the Christian name. Not even in the first century did they do so—as even a casual reading of Acts or of such epistles as that to the Galatians will clearly show.

Of all the major branches of Christians, Protestants have seemed to be the least likely to answer the prayer. The distinctive emphases of Protestantism appear to make for endless division. Salvation by faith, the priesthood of all believers, and the right and duty of each Christian to interpret the Scriptures as he feels led by the Holy Spirit appear to render impossible even a superficial unity and to continue to make new rents in what should be the seamless robe of the body of Christ. To use a biological term, Protestantism by its very nature seems to be progressively fissiparous.

Yet it is from Protestantism that this fresh attempt at Christian unity has emerged. It is as yet in its early stages and no one of us should be bold enough to predict its future, but we can at least tell how it came to be, describe its purpose, say something of its accomplishments, and note the direction in which it appears to be moving.

One of the striking features of the past century and a half is the fashion in which Protestants have been seeking to obey the great Commission and to make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all that our Lord commanded his inner group of disciples. At the end of the eighteenth century Protestantism was limited to Northwestern Europe, to the young and still feeble United States, to a few scattered small colonies from Northwestern Europe, and to a very few groups of Christians won by missionaries in India, the East Indies, and here and there along the shores of Africa. It was almost entirely a regional faith confined to a portion of the smallest of the continents. In the past hundred and fifty years, largely through the missionary enterprise, Protestantism has become worldwide and is now represented by churches in all but one or two lands which claim political independence.

As Protestants pursued their world mission, they early saw co-operation to be essential. Indeed, William Carey, the great pioneer of modern Protestant missions, proposed that interdenominational and international gatherings convene every ten years for consultation on the world mission and suggested that the first be held in Capetown in 1810. The daring of the suggestion becomes obvious when it is recalled that this was in the midst of the Napoleonic Wars, a struggle which affected all the continents. His chief supporter in England dismissed it as another one of Carey's "pleasant dreams."

Although Carey did not live to see his dream fulfilled, by the middle of the twentieth century it had become an actuality. In the course of the nineteenth century in India, China, and Japan conferences were held by missionaries across denominational lines to take counsel on their common task of evangelism, and these become periodic. In the twentieth century they multiplied. International interdenominational missionary gatherings convened for the same purpose. The most significant was in Edinburgh in 1910. From it came a Continuation Committee and in 1921 the International Missionary Council. The membership of the International Missionary Council is made up of national or regional co-operative bodies. Some of these are called national Christian councils. In the British Isles the member

is the Conference of the Missionary Societies of Great Britain and Ireland. In this country it is the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

Three features of this co-operation for world evangelism must be noted. First, these bodies are councils or conferences: They do not have the power to legislate for any missionary society or any church or denomination. They are for consultation on common problems and purposes and for such joint action as the constituent bodies may voluntarily undertake. Second, more and more they have ceased to be purely Occidental. In Asia "nationals" predominate in the several Christian councils and are the chief officers: missionaries from the Occident are in the minority and are in subordinate executive positions. In the meetings of the International Missionary Council "nationals" from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the islands of the Pacific are increasingly prominent, evidence that Protestantism is putting in deep roots outside the Occident. Third, co-operation is mounting. Carey's dream of decennial interdenominational, international gatherings to plan for the world mission is being abundantly and more than abundantly fulfilled.

From the World Missionary Conference of 1910 came an impulse which contributed to the formation of the World Conference on Faith and Order. The first meeting was in Lausanne in 1927. The purpose of Faith and Order was to bring together representatives of all the churches, Protestant and non-Protestant, to face frankly and in the spirit of brotherly love the issues on which they disagreed and without compromise by any of the churches of what they believed to be their distinctive and divinely commissioned witness to achieve a common and sympathetic understanding of one another's positions. The hope was cherished that through this interchange a way would be discovered to transcend the differences.

In the meantime, largely out of the efforts of Archbishop Soderblom, the Primate of the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden, had come the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work which held its first meeting in Stockholm in 1925. Some of the older attendants at meetings of the Baptist World Alliance will remember Archbishop Söder-

blom with profound gratitude for making available his cathedral when they met in Stockholm in 1923 and for the unobtrusive fashion in which he came to the rescue in an emergency and functioned for them at the organ. The purpose of Life and Work, as it was informally called, was to enable the churches to take counsel on social and political problems.

In the summer of 1937 Life and Work held in Oxford a memorable conference on Church, Community, and State, and a few weeks later a Faith and Order conference convened in Edinburgh. Many attended both gatherings. Some were of the conviction that the two movements so complemented each other that they should be brought together. The name, the World Council of Churches, was suggested as a designation which might well be given their joint enterprise.

Accordingly, in the spring of 1938 a hundred representatives of the churches which had been represented at Oxford and Edinburgh met at Utrecht, in Holland, and drafted a constitution for the World Council of Churches. Because of the outbreak of World War II the organization planned at Utrecht could not be at once complete. But throughout the war what was described as "the World Council of Churches in Process of Formation" functioned from Geneva in neutral Switzerland and did magnificent service in relief of refugees and other sufferers from the struggle. As soon as was feasible after the war a meeting was held in Amsterdam (1948) at which the World Council of Churches was formally instituted.

The constitution as framed at Utrecht and, with modifications, adopted in Amsterdam, describes the World Council of Churches as "a fellowship of those churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." It is frankly a fellowship. Like the International Missionary Council, it has no authority to legislate for its members. It has enabled the churches to do together some things which they were doing separately and, through co-ordination, to do them more effectively than heretofore. It is not and does not aspire to be a super-church. The word "church" is so defined as to enable denominations to join which are made up of local autonomous churches. Thus, through their na-

tional conventions or councils such bodies have become members as the Congregationalists of England, Wales, and the United States, the Baptist Union of England, and the American Baptist Convention.

The World Council of Churches is the hub of what is now commonly called the Ecumenical Movement. As all readers of *The Review and Expositor* will recall, the word Ecumenical is from a Greek word which means the inhabited, or civilized world. A number of other bodies of Protestant origin have global dimensions and are affiliated with the World Council of Churches but are not controlled by it nor control it. Among them are the World Council of Christian Education (formerly the World's Sunday School Association), the World's Student Christian Federation, the World's Committee of the Young Men's Christian Associations, and the World's Committee of the Young Women's Christian Associations. The many regional and national organizations such as the state councils of churches in this country, the British Council of Churches, and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, while friendly, are not tied in with the World Council of Churches: that body is resolutely a council of *churches*, and not the apex of a pyramid of regional and national co-operative bodies.

The co-operative organization with which the World Council of Churches has close ties is the International Missionary Council. That body, about a quarter of a century older than the other, has a notable record. Among its many accomplishments has been what was called the Orphaned Missions Fund, latterly Intermission Aid. It was begun near the outset of World War II to assist those Evangelical missions which were cut off by the war from their supporting constituencies. At first these were only German, already handicapped by the Hitler regime. Soon, as the Nazi wave engulfed other countries, they included the French, Dutch, Danish, and Norwegian missions. Funds were collected across denominational lines and were sent to missions which otherwise would have had to close, regardless of their denominational affiliation—so long as they were Evangelical. Although funds could not be provided equal to those available in pre-war days, so far as the officers of the Interna-

tional Missionary Council could determine, not a single mission had to cease for lack of funds. Some were discontinued because of enemy action, but none died of financial starvation. After the war aid was continued until recovery in the home agencies had proceeded far enough to enable the latter to resume their former responsibilities. In many other ways, such as comprehensive surveys of theological education in Africa and in Madagascar, the International Missionary Council has sought to further the worldwide planting of the Gospel.

It was natural that the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council should increasingly work together: they represent related approaches to the attempt to answer the prayer "that they all may be one that the world may believe." The phrase "mission and unity" has been coined to express that prayer more succinctly. "Mission," it will be noted, is put first, for the purpose of both bodies is not to bring Christians together in a vast and smug organization, but evangelism, namely to fulfill the Great Commission. If the Great Commission is really to be accomplished, so it is believed, the efforts of Christians in unity is imperative. That is partly for efficiency, but chiefly for witness. As long as Christians look askance at one another and proceed their different ways in rivalry, the world can scarcely believe that the "new commandment" that the disciples "love one another" as Christ loved them is more than a mockery. Therefore from the beginning the two bodies have worked together. Beginning in 1948 they were officially described as being "in association" with each other. What is described as the Joint Committee coordinates the two. They have shared in convening various conferences, especially in Southeast Asia; they have a joint office in East Asia; they co-operate in study and research; and they support and direct the Churches Commission on International Affairs. That Commission has already had a notable record in promoting religious liberty by working unobtrusively but effectively for it in the formulation of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights, in calling attention to violations of religious liberty and in other ways has sought to make the churches' voice heard on crucial international issues. One of the latest achievements is the

appeal to governments sent out through the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in the summer of 1957 to suspend the tests of atomic weapons. At present negotiations are under way for the full integration of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council. Because of procedural requirements, if this is accomplished it cannot be before 1960.

The organization of the World Council of Churches has as its central body the Assembly, with representatives of the member churches, which meets about every six years. The Assembly has supreme authority on such matters as have been committed to the World Council of Churches by the members under the constitution. Thus far its meetings have been in Amsterdam in 1948 and Evanston in 1954. It is scheduled to meet next in Ceylon in 1960. It has a smaller Central Committee which convenes annually and in connection with which various sub-committees and commissions normally meet. Its 1956 gathering was in Hungary and its 1957 meeting was on the campus of the Yale Divinity School. A still smaller executive committee meets semi-annually. The headquarters remain in Geneva, Switzerland. From there a full time secretariat operates. Near Geneva, at Bossey, on a commodious country estate, is the Ecumenical Institute which brings together individuals from many different countries and churches for fellowship, study, and discussion of common problems.

The World Council of Churches has undertaken a number of functions. It continues through a special commission the work of the World Conference on Faith and Order. The latest gathering of that commission was in Lund in 1952. Before these pages can appear in print the North American section of Faith and Order will have held in Oberlin, Ohio, a conference the theme of which is "the nature of the unity we seek." The topic is of first class importance, for as yet no common mind has been reached as to precisely what we mean when we speak of Christian unity. The Oberlin gathering can help in clarifying the issue, but that full agreement among the churches will at once follow seems extremely unlikely. Here is part of the adventure on which the World Council of Churches is embarked. The World Council of Churches is also engaged in the relief of refugees. That was

one of its major objectives while, during World War II, it was still "in process of formation." It continues to serve in that fashion, and on more than one front and in several countries. Through what it called Inter-Church Aid it seeks to bring the resources of all the churches to the assistance of some of its weaker members. Through its study division the World Council furthers study of various important subjects, some theological, some immediately practical, such as the problem of aiding in the undeveloped or backward areas and peoples of the globe. For many of these subjects the World Council seeks to promote what it calls "ecumenical conversations" and to bring together for reciprocal understanding and cross-fertilizing of minds and spirits leading men and women from the several denominations. There is also a department of evangelism under the Division of Studies.

The World Council of Churches has been singularly successful in drawing the churches into fellowship. Begun by Protestants, and still chiefly Protestant, it has brought into its membership the churches which comprise the overwhelming majority of the Protestant churches of Europe, Canada, and the majority, although not the overwhelming majority, of the Protestants of the United States. The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Protestant body which has thus far held aloof. Indeed, it contains the majority of all Protestants of the world who are not yet affiliated with the World Council. The majority of the Protestants of Asia and Australia are in the World Council of churches, a large proportion of those of Africa, and a smaller proportion of those of Latin America. One of the reasons, but not the only one, why more of the Protestants in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are not in the World Council of Churches is that many of "the younger churches" of these regions have not yet reached the stability of life and organization which entitles them to be rated as churches as the World Council defines that term. In addition to Protestants, some of the Eastern Churches have become members. The Greek Orthodox Church has been a member. Some of the Orthodox in this country and in other countries are members. The Polish National Church in this country (a body which broke with the Roman Catholic Church) is a member. Among the other non-Protestant member churches are the Mar Thoma

Church and the Syrian Church of India. The Roman Catholic Church has held aloof, for, consistently, it believes itself to be the only true church and that the only road to Christian unity is for all to come into its fold. Some of its hierarchy and scholars have been very much interested, but several of its outstanding bishops have denounced the World Council and have enjoined those under them to have nothing to do with the Ecumenical Movement. Rome has forbidden Catholics to participate in the consultations and other gatherings sponsored by the World Council of Churches.

In what direction is the World Council of Churches moving? Is it aiming at bringing all Christians into one inclusive ecclesiastical body as we have hitherto understood that term? That this will come seems quite improbable. Indeed, one of the results thus far of the World Council of Churches has been to heighten denominational consciousness. As the representatives of the member churches have been brought more closely together they have become more conscious of the distinctive convictions for which their respective churches have stood. They become more staunchly Presbyterian, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, or Baptist. That Christians, and especially Protestants, will surrender what they believe have been the trusts committed to them by Christ through their history and unite in one huge visible church of the kind with which we have become familiar appears utterly out of the realm of possibilities. To be sure, some ardent supporters of the World Council of Churches have this as their goal and honestly long and pray that it may be reached. But so far as anyone can now foresee, that prayer is not to be answered.

What is happening, however, is something new in history. Through the Ecumenical Movement, and especially through the World Council of Churches, Christians of the many churches are coming to have a better and more sympathetic understanding of one another and the heritage to which each is committed. They are discovering a higher and deeper unity in Christ than they had believed possible. They are finding ways in which they can work together for the furtherance of the Great Commission in all its breathtaking sweep. Some are realizing, to their wondering joy, that Paul's words to the Church in Corinth can be extended to all Christians of our day: "All things are yours. Whether

Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours. And ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

What organizational form or forms the Ecumenical Movement will take in the future we cannot know. We can be sure that it will not be perfect: nothing with which we imperfect human beings have to do ever is. But some of us believe that the Ecumenical Movement, including the World Council of Churches, is of God and that the Holy Spirit is seeking through it to guide us toward the answer to the high priestly prayer. We believe that through it the Spirit is speaking and we are endeavoring to hear through it what He is saying to the churches.

The Christian Doctrine of Vocation

BY GUY H. RANSON

We are witnesses in our generation to the most concerted attempt since the Reformation to emphasize the Christian doctrine of vocation. The present interest in this doctrine, like that of the Reformation, arose from a rediscovery of the Bible. We say "rediscovery" because we have relearned that the way to study the Bible is to seek to understand the perspectives of the inspired writers rather than seek support for our extra-biblical beliefs. Wherever men succeed in recovering biblical perspectives the doctrine of vocation must be emphasized, because it is among those most evident in the Bible.

We are also witnesses in our generation to one of the greatest perversions in history of the Christian doctrine of vocation. In America we have baptized the unconverted "gospel of work,"¹ and like all such baptisms the name but not the nature has been changed. It is the purpose of this essay, therefore, to state the biblical doctrine of vocation and bring it into sharp contrast with the contemporary American misunderstanding of vocation. The essay is intended to be theological. Practical means for teaching the biblical doctrine and for applying it in contemporary industrial society do not come within the scope of this paper. These practical considerations are fully as important as understanding the doctrine, and follow as a necessary consequence. Understanding without action is sterile, as action without understanding is futile. However, our allotted time permits consideration of the former only.

The Christian doctrine of vocation has two foci. First is the call of God to men for them to accept redemption and fulfill his purpose in them. Here attention is focused upon the activity of God in Israel, in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit and the church. Second is the response of men to Christ to serve their neighbors and glorify God in their daily work. Here attention is focused upon the obedience of men to God to live the Christian life in all of the social

1. See Robert S. Michaelsen, "The Gospel of Work in America," *Social Action*, XV, x (Dec. 15, 1949), pp. 4-13, for a brief and excellent discussion.

relationships on earth. In this essay we shall examine these two foci in their revelation in the Bible, their treatment in the history of the church, and their contemporary misunderstanding in America.

Before proceeding to the examination of Christian vocation, perhaps it will be well to indicate briefly the route by which we have been led to the contemporary rediscovery of it. Beginning with Ernst Troeltsch's notice in 1911 of the role of the understanding of vocation in determining social teachings,² and following through Einar Billing's study of the doctrine in Lutheranism,³ the history of the word calling by Karl Holl,⁴ to Robert L. Calhoun's systematic formulation and critique of the Reformation doctrine in 1935,⁵ a firm foundation was laid for the numerous and varied studies of the last decade. Recently the literature has become abundant, ranging from W. R. Forrester's systematic study⁶ and the comprehensive work edited by J. O. Nelson,⁷ through study course books,⁸ articles in learned journals,⁹ chapters of books on theology and ethics,¹⁰ lectures to divin-

2. Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (New York: Macmillan, 1931), 2 vols. The work was first published in Germany in 1911.

3. Einar Billing, *Our Calling* (Rock Island: Augustana Press, 1955), translated from *Lära om Kallelse*, 4th ed. (Lund: Lundquist Forlag, 1920).

4. Karl Holl, "Die Geschichte des Wortes Beruf," *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1928), vol. III, pp. 189-219.

5. Robert L. Calhoun, *God and the Common Life* (New York: Scribner's, 1935).

6. W. R. Forrester, *Christian Vocation* (New York: Scribner's, 1953).

7. John Oliver Nelson (ed.), *Work and Vocation* (New York: Harper, 1954).

8. Examples are Robert L. Calhoun, *God and the Day's Work* (New York: Association Press, 1943); Elton Trueblood, *Your Other Vocation* (New York: Harper, 1952); Alexander Miller, *Christian Faith and My Job* (New York: Association Press, 1946); Cameron P. Hall, *The Christian At His Daily Work* (New York: National Council of Churches, 1951).

9. Examples are Robert S. Michaelsen, "Changes in the Puritan Conception of Calling or Vocation," *New England Quarterly*, XXVI, iii, pp. 315-36; Philip S. Watson, "Luther's Doctrine of Vocation," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, II, iv (Dec., 1949), pp. 364-77; E. Clinton Gardner, "Rethinking the Protestant Doctrine of Vocation," *Religion in Life*, XXV (Summer, 1956), pp. 366-77.

10. Examples are Emil Brunner, "Work," ch. V of *Christianity and Civilization*, Part II: Specific Problems (New York: Scribner's, 1949); Cameron P. Hall, "Daily Work and Christian Vocation," pp. 91-103 of J. Richard Spann (ed.), *The Church and Social Responsibility* (New York: Abingdon, 1953).

ity students,¹¹ monographs,¹² special numbers of religious journals,¹³ studies of church vocations,¹⁴ articles in dictionaries and encyclopedias,¹⁵ Christian analyses of modern industrial society,¹⁶ to the practice of Christian vocation in the complex contemporary world.¹⁷ Moreover, both young people and laymen have held a number of conferences to find means of coping with the difficulties of responding to God's call in modern work, and many denominations have created departments of Christian vocation. From these have come many tracts, pamphlets, and study programs.¹⁸ Furthermore, many popularly written articles are now appearing in widely circulated papers and magazines, both religious and secular.¹⁹

11. An example is Douglas V. Steers, *Work and Contemplation* (New York: Harper, 1957).

12. Examples are Alan Richardson, *The Biblical Doctrine of Work* (London: SCM, 1952); Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957).

13. Examples are *The Baptist Student*, XXXVI, v (Feb., 1957); *Social Action*, XV, x (Dec. 15, 1949); *The Student World*, XLIII, ii (2nd Quarter, 1950).

14. Examples are John Oliver Nelson, *Opportunities in Protestant Religious Vocations* (New York: Vocational Guidance Manuals, 1952); *International Journal of Religious Education*, XXXIII, v (Jan., 1957).

15. Examples are "Vocation," in Vergilius Ferm (ed.), *An Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1945), pp. 815-16; "Call, Called, Calling," in Alan Richardson (ed.), *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (London: SCM, 1950), pp. 39-40; "Work, Labour," *Ibid.*, pp. 285-87.

16. Examples are G. W. Davis, *Men at Work* (London: SCM, 1946); Marquis W. Childs and Douglass Carter, *Ethics in a Business Society* (New York: New American Library, 1954).

17. Examples are Alexander Miller, *Christian Vocation in the Contemporary World* (London: SCM, 1947); J. H. Oldham, *Work in Modern Society* (New York: Morehouse-Gorham, 1950); R. N. Mould, *Christianity Where Men Work* (New York: Friendship, 1947).

18. Examples are John Oliver Nelson, "Every Occupation a Christian Calling" (New York: Association Press, 1951); "Report on the North American Lay Conference on the Christian and His Daily Work" (New York: National Council of Churches); "Religion in the Day's Work" (*Ibid.*); "On the Job Dilemmas of Christian Laymen" (*Ibid.*); *Baptist Young People's Union Quarterly*, LVI, iv (Oct.-Dec., 1955), pp. 3-14; LVII, ii (April-June, 1956), pp. 3-14.

19. Examples are Richard E. Price, "The Meaning of Christian Vocation," *The Religious Herald*, CXXIX, xi (March 14, 1957), pp. 4-5, 14; Guy H. Ranson, "The Christian Vocation of the Homemaker," *Ibid.*, CXXX, xxi (May 23, 1957), pp. 4-5; Henry P. Van Dusen, "Men of God," *The Watchman Examiner*, XLV, x (March 7, 1957), pp. 220-21; Mrs. Billy Graham, "Homemakers by Divine Appointment," *Family Circle*, L, iv (April, 1957), pp. 40-41, 70-71.

I. *The Significance of Calling in the Bible*

A number of Hebrew and Greek words are used in the Bible for call, called, and calling. These have a variety of uses, such as to name, to speak, to say, to cry, to send after, and to summon. Sometimes these words have no vocational significance. However, they frequently indicate that God has claimed a group or an individual to be both the recipient of his grace and the means by which his purpose in the world is to be fulfilled. It is with these instances that we are now concerned, and in studying them we note three distinct meanings of God's calling.²⁰

1. The Call to Salvation

The primary significance of God's call is his summon to salvation. This invitation was issued to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-16; 17:1-14; 22:15-19), and it was renewed to Isaac (Gen. 26:23-5), to Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15; 35:9-12), and to Moses (Ex. 3). Under the leadership of Moses the Israelites as a group accepted their vocation to fellowship with God and make him known to others when they entered into covenant with him (Ex. 24). This covenant was reaffirmed under Joshua (Josh. 24), and the Hebrews were frequently reminded of their vocation by judges, prophets, priests, and kings. God revealed to the Hebrews that the good for mankind is to know God and serve his purpose in the creation and redemption of the world. The nation Israel was given a holy vocation, and each Hebrew was individually given the same vocation. The call was corporate and social, and just for this reason it was also personal. Men were called to reveal God in their social life, in all of the relationships in which men live a national life. They were called to serve God by being neighbors to one another under God's dominion in which they could act toward one another as God acted toward them.²¹

In Jesus Christ the vocation which was given to Israel

20. Cf. J. P. Thornton-Duesbery, "Call, Called, Calling," in Alan Richardson (ed.), *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (London: SCM, 1950), pp. 39-40; Forrester, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-21.

21. Cf. Paul S. Minear, "Work and Vocation in Scripture," in John Oliver Nelson (ed.), *Work and Vocation* (New York: Harper, 1954), pp. 48-51; Forrester, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-9.

was given to all men.²² "Jesus came . . . preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand'" (Mark 1:14-15). This is the announcement that men may in Christ accept the dominion of God and submit their lives to his purpose to be the Lord of all of their personal-social relationships. Christ reveals that life consists not in the fulfillment of man's natural desires but in losing this life of the old man and finding newness of life. In exchange for ownership of self and being shut up to one's own miserable self-direction, man is given a new self restored to God and able to live by his direction. This life consists of denial of self, rejection of the world, and following Jesus in bearing a cross (Mark 8:27-9:1).

The call of God to salvation is stated most explicitly in the Epistles of the New Testament. It is expressed variously as call to fellowship with Christ (I Cor. 1:9), to follow Christ (I Pet. 3:9), to peace with Christ (Col. 3:15), to freedom (Gal. 5:13), to a new walk and a new hope (Eph. 4:1, 4), and to receive the promised eternal inheritance of God (Heb. 9:15). The ones who receive salvation do so not because of merit or good works but according to God's grace and action in Jesus Christ (II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5; Rom. 11:29-30). For this reason calling and election are sometimes synonymous. The redeemed are to walk worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1), press on to the goal of their calling (Phil. 3:14), be zealous to confirm their call and election (II Pet. 1:10), and pray that others may receive the call of God (II Thes. 1:11).

The call to salvation is both to righteousness in the world to come (Phil. 3:8-14) and in the world which is present with us (Eph. 2). This is because we are now reconciled to God (Rom. 5:6-11) and are being saved by the power of the cross (I Cor. 1:18). Our call is that we shall not be conformed to this present world but that we shall be transformed that we may prove what is the good and perfect will of God for us in this world (Rom. 12:1-2). We are justified that we may be conformed to the image of the Son (Rom. 8:29-30). We are redeemed that we may be freed from bondage to sin (Rom. 7:14-25). We are adopted as heirs of Christ that we may be the household of God (Rom.

22. Cf. Minear, *ibid.*, pp. 58-63; Forrester, *ibid.*, pp. 29-31.

8:14-17). We are reconciled to God and made ministers of reconciliation because we are made to be new creatures in Christ (II Cor. 5:16-21). We are sanctified and set aside for ethical living (Rom. 15:16; I Cor. 1:2; Titus 3:1-7). Being saved therefore we put to death what is earthly in us and put on the things of God (Col. 3:1-17); we put off the works of the flesh and put on the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-25).

It must be pointed out that in the call to salvation vocation is not to be understood as a specified job. The vocation is to receive God's grace and to make it known to others by means of one's conduct in his job, and indeed in all of the relationships in which he exists as a person.

2. The Call to Service in Life's Stations

The second meaning of calling is God's call to men to serve him in their stations in life. This of course is subordinate to the call to salvation and is contingent upon it. This meaning of calling is explicitly stated only by the Apostle Paul, but it seems to have been assumed by many biblical writers. This appears, as examples, where it is said that men's needs are supplied by God directing their work and giving the increase (Ps. 104; Deut. 7:12-8:20), where men's work comes to naught because they seek their own glory rather than the will of God (Isa. 29:13-16; I Cor. 3:10-15), and where man's labor is in vain unless it is done unto the Lord (Ps. 127:1).

The Apostle Paul says that it is his rule in all the churches that each person should serve God in the station in which he was engaged when he was called to salvation. Any honorable task and station in life may become the means by which the Christian serves his neighbor and glorifies God. Many have misunderstood this meaning of calling. The objection is brought that this teaching would sanctify even unlawful and unchristian stations, occupations, and practices. That Paul did not mean to do this is obvious, because he condemned the occupations of robbing, thieving, begging, and idol making, and he would exclude from church membership those who practice idleness, greed, covetousness, malice, evil talk, luxury, and revelry in their stations (Acts 19:19-27; I Cor. 5:9-13; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:5, 18; Col. 3:5; II Thes. 3:6-12). A second objection is that the doctrine

would maintain the *status quo*, preserving such evils as slavery and political oppression in society and precluding changes of occupation and status. This objection ignores the fact that in the very passage in which Paul states the doctrine he is urging some changes (I Cor. 7). What he commands is that people serve God in the opportunities that are afforded them in whatever circumstances they find themselves, and what he condemns is their restless seeking after advantages for themselves.²³

All useful and honorable stations are appointed by God, and men are to accept their stations as places in which to fellowship with God and serve him by acting in love toward their neighbors. For this reason there is no hierarchy of callings, ranging from menial through acceptable and honorable to spiritual. Every permitted station is a sacred calling, and there is equality of honor and dignity among all who serve God in their positions (I Cor. 1:26-31; 12:14-31). Not only is one's station given by God, but he can discharge his responsibilities only because God supplies the necessary gifts (I Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:1-16; Rom. 12:3-8). Acceptance of vocation under God requires, therefore, that our stations and our talents be committed to God's purpose in the world. To refuse such commitment is to reject our calling and to miss the joy of salvation.

3. The Call to Specific Tasks

The third kind of call of God is to a specific task. Many of the heroes of the biblical stories are those whom God summoned to his service in particular assignments. Several things should be noted with regard to their callings.²⁴ First, the call was to perform a service which would be a benefit to the community. God did not call men except that by the performance of some work they would be related to God and further his purpose for mankind. The nation was the social reference in the Old Testament, as was the church in the New Testament. The sense of corporate unity is everywhere in evidence. Second, the one called was not to

23. Cf. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*, trans. by John Pringle (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), vol. I, pp. 245-51.

24. This discussion follows somewhat that of Minear, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-4.

perform some daring feat that would bring glory to himself and exalt him above others. He was placed under greater obligation and was to give himself in dedication to God's purpose in the task to be performed. Third, calling was not channeled into a profession. God neither called men to one profession alone nor confined his call to those who were in a particular profession. The significance of this strikes home to us when we note that members of the clerical class inherited their task and were not individually called to it. Those who were called to special tasks did the work of judges, statesmen, shepherds, warriors, scribes, prophets, kings and other tasks which were not distinguished from the work of many others. The thing that set their work apart was not the tasks themselves but the fact that they were done with a sense of urgency because directed by God to his assigned purpose in them. Sometimes the task was for a lifetime, as in the case of Paul, but often it was for a brief duration, as in the case of Amos. Fourth, a call could not be initiated by man. It came from God alone; man could only respond to it when it came. The false prophets of Israel and Simon Magus are examples of those who would control the call. Fifth, those who were called were usually brought into conflict with their society. This was because they were not called out of society but to reprove and correct it as God directed. God's concern in the Bible is for men in society. It was natural therefore that when his servants acted for him that they should have announced messages filled with social ethics. These servants were called not to be glorified but to be persecuted, because like Christ they would act for God and thus contrary to men's desires. Sixth, the tasks were performed not by the natural strength of the ones who were called but by the gifts and powers which were supplied by God. Seventh, the one who was called was placed under the law of greatness. He was not to be served but was to be the servant of all.

II. *The Significance of Work in the Bible*

Work is one of the two primary means by which men respond to God's call. When it is coupled with worship we have the two sides of man's obligation which derives from his calling by God. In worship man responds to God's in-

vation to fellowship with him, but until the worship is joined by willing service of God and neighbor it is sterile. The invitation to fellowship actually includes both submission of spirit in worship and dedication of energy and talents in work.

There are a number of Hebrew and Greek words in scripture which designate work. These are translated variously as to labor, to expend energy, to form or frame, to act, to do, to serve, to toil, and to dispense wisdom. They include everything from God's creation to the most menial task of a slave, including the saving work of Christ and the work of the proclamation of the gospel. All are relevant to our study of vocation. They can be classified under three topics.²⁵

1. The Creative Work of God

The first meaning of work is the creative work of God.²⁶ This is the focal point for understanding the significance of man's work. God is a working God who works with a purpose. It was this work which Christ advanced and into which he called his disciples. Everywhere the God of the Bible is revealed to be the working God. He works to create and sustain the universe. He works to redeem, govern, and nurture his creatures. He enters into the work of men to make it fruitful. He works with men and society to transform them. At every moment and in all places he is at work accomplishing his will in all that he has made.

Two things in particular must be noted about God's work. First, his work is purposive. God's work is not from some inner necessity, a restlessness, an excess of energy, a need for something other than himself, or anything of this sort. God has a goal, a purpose toward which he works. He willed to call men into being and to call them into a loving relationship with himself. God's work is directed toward this end, and men are invited to share in this work. Second, God's work is creative. Man's work, therefore, is derivative and different in kind. Man only manipulate; God alone can create. God is spoken of as

25. Alan Richardson, *The Biblical Doctrine of Work* (London: SCM, 1952), p. 13.

26. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 14-16; Forrester, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-8; Minear, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-6.

making with his hands (Gen. 2:4ff; Ps. 8:3, 6; 19:1) and as resting from his work (Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:11), but he is also understood to create by the mere exercise of his will (Gen. 1:1-2:3). His word (Isa. 55:11) and wisdom (Prov. 8:30; Ps. 104:24) are the effective agents or instruments of his work. But they are not like the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus* who is opposed by stubborn matter, which causes imperfection and frustration. God creates the universe other than himself, and it is radically contingent upon him. There is no suggestion, however, that physical work with matter is in any sense degrading for man.

2. The Redeeming Work of Christ

The second kind of work in the Bible is the redeeming work of Christ.²⁷ Paul says that Christ took the form of a servant, a worker, a slave (Phil. 2:7). He was known to his neighbors as a workman, an artisan (Mark 6:3). By becoming man and working for his daily bread he forever blessed and dignified physical toil, but he does not say that men are saved by mere honest toil. Work must be directed to a purpose if it is to be significant. Christ's work accomplishes the work of creation. In him is the purpose of God to redeem men to rapport with himself fulfilled.

It is in the Gospel of John that we have Jesus' activities so often spoken of as works. First, Jesus says that his work is given to him by the Father. "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (4:34). "We must work the works of him who sent me" (9:4). Second, he says that the Father is the source of his work (14:10) and that actually he does only what the Father shows him and accomplishes through him (5:19-20). Third, his works manifest the work of the Father (9:3). By them men should recognize him as being from God (10:38; 14:11), because they are indeed witnesses that he is from God (5:36; 10:25). Fourth, those who believe him do the work of God (6:29), enter into the work of Abraham (8:39), and they will do greater works that he himself has done (14:14). Fifth, he is actually rejected because men despise him for doing the

27. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 30-4; Forrester, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-5; Minear, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31.

works of God rather than the works of men (10:32; 15:24). Finally, at death Jesus says that he has finished the work that the Father gave him to do (17:4).

3. Man's Work in Response to God

The third kind of work in the Bible is the work of men in witnessing to the redeeming work of Christ. Roman Catholics have understood this witness to consist primarily in "spiritual works" of ascetic practice apart from the world. Many Protestants have understood it to consist in verbalization of the life and death of Jesus, or verbal witnessing to "spiritual things."²⁸ The Reformation doctrine of vocation is characterized by its rejection of both of these notions and the insistence that men's witness to Christ's redemption must be made in and through their daily work. This is to maintain that a verbal witness is nothing until it is the articulation of a transformed life. The witness of man is a life that gives evidence of having been redeemed so that a person is truly Christ-like in all of the social relationships in which he lives. If he truly denies himself as being the center of his universe and serves his neighbor in love as Christ gave himself for men, then he is witnessing to the redeeming work of Christ.

The stories of the creation and the fall (Gen. 1-4) reveal a great deal concerning the significance of work. We have understood these stories to teach that work is a curse and that leisure is a blessing. Such notions come from Greek culture and not from the Bible. When we read these stories carefully we find that Adam was a worker before the fall, having been given the task of keeping the Garden. As long as he did his work in submission to God he was happy and blessed in it. It was after he became filled with pride and greed that work seemed a curse to him. The ground was cursed by God because of Adam's sin, but work itself never became a curse. The means of livelihood were made resistant to man so that gaining sustenance came to be accompanied with drudgery and grief. But work could still be a means for fellowship between God and man, as is seen in the acceptable offering of Abel. Of course it became also a means by which

28. This position is most ably implemented in Alan Richardson's *The Biblical Doctrine of Work* (London: SCM, 1952).

men were alienated from God and one another. Work and ownership of property so easily become accompanied by jealousy, greed, self-seeking, fighting, hatred, and such sins, as is seen in the case of Cain. Work therefore must be redeemed by God in order that it may be a means by which men respond to God to serve their neighbors. Unless it is redeemed it becomes a primary means by which men hate their brothers and squeeze life and humanity from them.

III. *The History of Christian Vocation*

When we become aware of the biblical revelation of vocation, we wonder how we ever came to depart so far from it. Many factors are involved in our departure from the Bible, but most of them are historically conditioned. A brief examination of the dominant conceptions of Christian vocation in the history of the church will give us some important insights into the present misunderstanding of vocation.²⁹

In the early church³⁰ there was both witness to the Biblical revelation and subversion of it. "The Epistle to Diognetus,"³¹ written about 130 A.D., presents a wonderful interpretation of the vocation of the Christians in this world. It is given in terms of a dual citizenship, in which a Christian is a good citizen of society on earth only because he is a good citizen of the kingdom of God. We see the subversion of Christian vocation in Ambrose's "Duties of the Clergy,"³² written about 391 A. D. The growing tendency to distinguish between religious and secular tasks and between ordinary and perfect duties was crystalized by Ambrose. The latter distinction was actually taken over from Cicero's "The Offices,"³³ but it was supposedly found in the story of the Rich Young Ruler in Matthew's Gospel (19:16-23). Ambrose understood Jesus to teach that those who live upright lives in the common pursuits of life fulfill ordinary duties, and for this they may be rewarded with heaven. But if anyone

29. Cf. Karl Holl, *op. cit.*; Robert L. Calhoun, "Work and Vocation in Christian History," in John Oliver Nelson (ed.), *Work and Vocation* (New York: Harper, 1954), pp. 82-115.

30. Cf. Forrester, *op. cit.*, ch. III.

31. "The Epistle to Diognetus," chas. V-VI, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Buffalo: Christian Literature Co., 1886), vol. I, pp. 26-7.

32. Ambrose, "The Duties of the Clergy," *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1896), vol. X.

33. Cicero, "The Offices," bk. I, ch. iii, *Everyman's Library* (New York: Dutton, 1909), pp. 4-5.

would be perfect he should forsake the world and accept the perfect duties of ascetic councils. Then "in the day of judgment he will receive salvation from the Lord, Whom he will have as his debtor for the mercy he has shown."³⁴ This idea that we are to answer to God's call by spatial separation from society is almost the antithesis of the biblical understanding that we are to witness to God's dominion by staying in society and loving our neighbors.

The medieval church followed and made dominant the position of Ambrose. It is in the intellectual mystics that we see the extreme of this attitude. They held that ordinary things of social existence are to be avoided even in thought, because it is the duty of the perfect Christian to fill his mind entirely with the being and love of God. However, it was in the monasteries where such perfection was to be cultivated that manual arts were cultivated and given back to the world. In the medieval church vocation came to be associated exclusively with the call to the monastic life. A call was always to perfection within the profession of the monasticism.

The Reformers restored the biblical understanding of Christian vocation, with particular emphasis upon service of God in life's stations.³⁵ They destroyed distinctions between religious and secular tasks and perfect and ordinary duties. They maintained that all of life to the Christian consists of religious devotion to God. Furthermore, they maintained that perfect devotion is required of everyone. Since all are under grace, no one can perform more than is required and thereby put God under obligation to reward him. On the contrary, each person is completely dependent upon God's grace. He must therefore respond to God in gratitude and give himself in willing service of God by serving his neighbors. Every person has been appointed a station in which he can serve God in the institution of society. As we submit ourselves to God's dominion we live acceptable lives on earth.

The immediate successors of the Reformers were so

34. Ambrose, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

35. See John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., tran. by John Allen (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1936), Bk. I, chs. VI, VII, X, XXIV; Bk. IV, ch. XIII. Luther's teachings run throughout his writings. See Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, trans by C. C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957).

insistent upon emphasizing that calling applied not to clergy alone but to every one, that vocation came to be associated with the tasks through which men serve God. Whereas vocation in the medieval church meant only the "religious" profession, it came after the Reformation to mean "secular" occupations. Thus vocation in America means an occupation below the "professions," and vocational education means training for manipulative skills below training of the mind in liberal arts. Both of these interpretations are, of course, contrary to the biblical teaching.

Under the influence of commercialism and industrialism in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries the understanding of Christian vocation underwent another radical change. The change had an opposite emphasis to that of Ambrose, but it was as far on one side of the Bible as Ambrose was on the opposite side. The more recent change did not advocate escape from daily tasks in order to reach perfection but believed that work itself could produce salvation. This note was epitomized by Henry Ford when he said, "Work is our sanity, our self-respect, *our salvation*."³⁶ The type of salvation sought was the antithesis of that of Ambrose, as is also epitomized by Mr. Ford: "Through work and work alone may health, wealth, and happiness inevitably be secured."³⁷ The recent emphasis accents devotion to daily work that salvation may be had, in the sense that man's higher nature is realized, his lower nature is disciplined, and he gains security for himself and his dependents on earth. The end result is that God will reward us with everlasting salvation because of our faithfulness to business duties while on earth.

IV. *Christian Vocation In Contemporary America*

The purpose of this essay has been stated to be the intention to bring the Biblical and the prevailing American doctrines of Christian vocation into sharp contrast. This, of course, is done with the ultimate purpose of making it possible for Christians to see and choose the former and reject the latter. At this point the remaining task is to state

36. Quoted by Robert S. Michaelsen, "The Gospel of Work in America," *Social Action*, XV, x (Dec. 15, 1949), p. 4. Italics are by Michaelsen.

37. *Loc. cit.*

the American doctrine of Christian vocation and point out briefly wherein it fails. Perhaps it is in order first to state something of the orientation and procedure for this task. First, we are concerned not with vocation as such in America but with the American doctrine of Christian vocation. Second, although we are speaking of a "doctrine," in the strict sense we have only certain elements. These do not form a systematic and coherent doctrine, but remain as associated elements. Third, the elements of Christian vocation in America do not fall into the same order and receive the same emphases in the minds of all American Christians. Thus our discussion here does not pretend to be an exact formulation of a creed. Fourth, the elements of Christian vocation in America are now being given careful analysis and criticism in the contemporary recovery of the biblical emphasis upon vocation. Therefore the very view of vocation that we are now examining is in process of change. Fifth, our procedure here will be to state briefly the dominant elements of Christian vocation in America and to point out in the briefest possible way wherein these elements are in conflict with the Bible.

One element of the American doctrine of Christian vocation is the notion that God's call is given only to those whom he chooses for church vocations. Thus a distinction is made between "religious vocations" and "secular jobs." The preacher is shocked if his profession is called a job, and the layman is affronted if it is suggested that he has a divine calling. The error of this position should be immediately apparent when we consult the passages of scripture in which this notion is supposedly taught (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; Eph. 4:11-16). In these it is clear that men are to serve God in relation to the church, but the church here is the community of the redeemed and not a locally organized body. The gifts are that members of the church, the body of Christ, shall love and serve one another that both the body and the members of it shall fulfill God's purpose in them. The gifts do not become individual possessions of those who are called to vocations in the church. The gifts are God's and he gives and directs them to the welfare of his redeemed people.

A second element is the notion that religious service

to God consists of private devotions, attendance at worship and monetary support of organized functions of a local church, verbal witness to Christ's saving work, and acceptance of a place of service in a local church. The weight of the New Testament is so utterly opposed to this notion that the most cursory reading of the Epistles should immediately dispel it. There the emphasis is upon the obligation of the Christian to conduct his whole life so that he is a living witness to God's redeeming grace in Christ.

A third element is the notion that the purpose of the Christian life is to test the soul for fitness for a future heaven. The Greek notion of a soul as a separate entity with temporary abode in a material body whose object it is to attain to immortality in a future state has gained acceptance in America. This notion has allowed people to seek "soul salvation" and to be unconcerned about the biblical teaching that redemption means the actual transformation of men in society.

A fourth element is the idea that salvation is strictly an individual matter. With this notion Renaissance and rugged American individualism have been substituted for the biblical sense of corporate unity of the people of God. This idea has come in under the perfectly proper doctrine of personal salvation. The trouble is that the real meaning of personal has been subverted. A person in the Christian meaning is one who is related in social ways to his fellows. In the American individualistic sense personal means an unrelated thing which can act toward itself and other persons not as an "I" or a "thou" but as an "it." In this way we have made it appear that we can be Christians without actually loving our neighbors and bearing a cross for them. Thus we have been able to oppress one another economically and politically in all good conscience.

A fifth element is the belief that success in the competitive industrial world is the immediate object of life on earth and that it is the sure sign of God's blessing. If we are able to advance in our chosen work, gain security from economic worry, provide cultural opportunities for our dependents, and find happiness and peace of mind, we are sure that we are within the will of God. This simply ignores the mood of the New Testament, which is that if we obey

Christ in our daily walk we shall be persecuted, scourged, reviled, slandered, insulted, cast out of home, be in want and hunger, killed, and crucified (Matt. 5:10-11; 23:34; Lk. 21:12; Jno. 15:20; I Cor. 4:8-13; II Cor. 12:10). We suppose that Jesus spoke only of his immediate hearers when he said, "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:11), and "Woe to you, when men speak well of you" (Lk. 6:26). We choose not to take the writer seriously who said, "Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). Even the ministers of the churches measure their devotion to God by their success in "gaining larger fields of service" — meaning that the worldly standard of success has been taken over by Christian pastors and disguised with pious talk.

Conclusion

When we view the elements of Christian vocation in America and begin to see something of the orientation in which they exist, and then measure this sense of vocation by that of the Bible, we become troubled and grieved and are driven to confess the error of our way and beg forgiveness and correction. Furthermore, we feel God calling us to lead lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called. If we are to respond to him we must make clear to ourselves and to our brothers in Christ what is the nature of our vocation, and we must devise means whereby we may live under the dominion of God in all of the social relationships of life.

Book Reviews

The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology. Edited by W. B. Davies and D. Daube. Cambridge University Press, 1956. 536 pages. \$13.50.

Perhaps no single work in the area of New Testament studies so ably attests the reputation of Charles Harold Dodd as does this book written in his honor. An open letter to Professor Dodd serves as the preface and includes this statement from the editors: "This book, Dr. Dodd, has been a labor of love on the part of its contributors from many different nations and communities. Of the two editors, one of the Jewish faith was long your colleague and the other was your pupil."

The scope of the essays is aptly described in the title and the two parts of the collection parallel the title. In Part I "Towards an Understanding of the Background of the New Testament" excellent articles appear by E. C. Blackman "The Task of Exegesis," R. P. Casey "Gnosis, Gnosticism, and the New Testament," and F. C. Grant "The Economic Background of the New Testament." Those by H. J. Schoeps "Die ebionitische Wahrheit des Christentums" and W. F. Albright "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St. John," are subject to adverse criticism at the point of their finding parallels where parallels do not exist. This is a frequently recurring difficulty in such background studies and will, of course, be subject to individual interpretation. Such exaggerated findings are a necessary part of scholarly progress. In Part II "Towards an Understanding of the Eschatology of the New Testament" the best articles are those by C. K. Barrett "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," T. W. Manson, "The Life of Jesus: Some Tendencies in Present Day Research," and A. N. Wilder, "Kerygma, Eschatology, and Social Ethics." Most of the twenty-six essays comprising the book are in English, though there are a few in German and French.

Very attractive features include a brief biographical sketch of Professor Dodd and a select bibliography of his works. Perhaps it is no fault at all for a volume of this scope and arrangement, but the only connecting threads of unity are those of Dodd himself and the two very broad subjects included in the title. These are separate and distinct essays. On the other hand, one has but to glance at the bibliography of Professor Dodd's works to see that the only confining unity of his works is their relationship to the New Testament. It is enough to say, then, that these very readable and scholarly articles are about the New Testament. Any scribe "of the New Testament" will find endless delight in this breadth and excellence.

J. Estill Jones

Galilean Christianity. By L. Elliott-Binns. Studies in Biblical Theology, Number 16. Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Allenson, Inc., 1956. 80 pages. \$1.50.

In this brief work the author has sought an answer to some very interesting questions about primitive Christianity. The problems surrounding the disappearance of the twelve from leading positions in the church, the ascendancy of James and the very centralization of Christianity in Jerusalem are all considered against the background of the Galilean ministry of the Lord and the character of the Epistle of James. Such problems do not have an easy solution and that which directs the whole process toward Ebionitism and Islam is not wholly satisfactory.

Yet, the treatment is an honest and scholarly effort and is well worth reading. The book frequently offers refreshing distinctions as that on page 26 between the Jewish faith of the Galileans and the Judeans: the Galileans "cling to it as a mark of separation. In other words, they were nationalistically and not ecclesiastically minded and though holding fast to their religion, were by no means ready to submit to the rigid interpretations current in official quarters."

Of further interest is the proposed commentary on the epistle of James by the same author of which work this seems to be a by-product.

J. Estill Jones

Jesus and the First Three Gospels. By Walter E. Bundy. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955. 579 pages. \$7.50.

This "Introduction to the Synoptic Tradition" is a companion volume to the author's earlier *Syllabus and Synopsis of the First Three Gospels*. The paragraph numbers are paralleled so the two books may be used together. The author, Professor of Bible at DePauw University, has thus provided two important tools for the New Testament student.

The footnotes are a veritable bibliography of the last one hundred years in synoptic criticism and represent the author's long preparation in the field. The pericopes are disentangled and then treated on the basis of the three-fold gospel presentation. At the same time the individual character of the gospel writer (Mark a "Dogmatist," Matthew a "Cathecist," and Luke an "Apologist") is preserved and heeded. The wealth of detail and the mechanical perfection is useful for the serious student of the synoptics.

The outer cover of the book describes Professor Bundy as bringing "to the study of the synoptic story of Jesus the same detachment and objectivity which the professional historian and critic employs." This detachment is the chief thought of the book. While the author's characterization of the gospels as more "tradition" than "biography" may be widely accepted, the fact remains that they comprise very

significant traditions. These the author does not bother to interpret, feeling his task to be complete in their delineation. An example of this weakness is the presentation of the Beatitudes in only four pages. In this brief treatment the author is concerned only with the comparison of the materials in Matthew and Luke. The mechanic has wrought well. Alas, the mere organization of the material is not complete and satisfactory exegesis.

J. Estill Jones

The Epistles of John. By W. T. Conner. Nashville: The Broadman Press, 1957. \$2.50.

The Gospels and Paul's writings have long been in the center of Christian thought and action. It has been predicted that the great period for John's writings lies in the future. Not that these writings have been ignored. Particularly in the field of historical criticism, the johannine problem has been discussed vigorously, with helpful but not completely satisfactory results.

Apart from historical and literary questions, John's writings are loaded with explosive and practical content. There is no more dynamic book in existence than *First John*! Dr. Conner has seized upon this content and has interpreted it in a clear and forceful way.

This book is not intended for the research scholar, interested primarily in linguistic and critical questions. It is pointed straight to the busy pastor, Sunday School teacher and other earnest Christians who wish to use the Bible for what it was intended—to strengthen faith, and to guide believers in living their faith. The Johannine authorship is accepted; and but little attention is given to the people and problems that called forth these Epistles. This adds to the value of the book—for the readers for whom it is intended.

The author makes splendid use of the solid results of historical and critical research, and of scientific methods of exegesis and interpretation. The writing is scholarly and clear; it gives the fruits of but not the tools and methods used in the study. The author comments on key words, phrases and ideas, organizing his materials around the main concepts and divisions into which the Epistles logically fall. Valuable linguistic and syntactical light is thrown on such controversial verses as *First John* 3:6, 9.

The author would be quick to make room for differences of opinion on such matters as "the propitiation" and "the antichrist" (*First John* 2:2, 22). And there is a great deal more involved in John's primary purpose (*First John* 5:13) than our author brings out. Yet what he says points in the right direction.

It would be tragic to read this book *instead* of what John wrote. But to focus thought on John's words and use Dr. Conner's comments as a means to a clearer grasp of John's ideas will make one a better Christian. Get this book and use it.

William W. Adams

The Vision and Mission of Jesus. By Arthur H. Curtis. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1954. 388 pages. 27 Shillings.

Professor Curtis has elaborated upon the title in a sub-title which more clearly describes the nature of his book, "A Literary and Critical Investigation Based Specially Upon the Baptismal and Temptation Narratives and Their Old Testament Background."

It is difficult to either criticize or characterize the work. There are no limitations on the author's interest or treatment. Even the "Findings in Propositional Form" which ought to reveal basic principles cover such an expanse as to prove confusing rather than clarifying. Though presented boldly and with much promise a proposition such as "because the poor shall always be with us, Jesus made himself poor" will hardly impress the reader with its logic.

The subject is provocative: much time and space has been devoted to it, but the end result fails to be a clear presentation of Jesus' vision or mission. Yet, there are many helpful statements and interesting interpretations. The chief criticism is its lack of coherence.

J. Estill Jones

The Book of Acts in History. By Henry J. Cadbury. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1955. 170 pages. \$2.75.

In describing the milieu of the Book of Acts, Harvard Professor Emeritus Cadbury reveals something of the same familiarity with ancient cultural strands as he discovers in Luke and at the same time he reveals a refreshing disinterest in proving the historicity of Acts from secular sources. He treats the Oriental, Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian settings against the background of archaeology and ancient literature. There is no limit as to the type of sources consulted and the result is a worthy postscript to his commentary work in the *Beginnings of Christianity*.

With the author's interpretation and presentation, hardly anyone will take real issue. After all, it is difficult to disagree with frequent occurrences of "perhaps" and "probably." Yet, this is exactly what was promised in the preface. The author is a self-styled detective looking for evidence. If he chooses to present only circumstantial evidence, then it is for the reader to solve the case. That there are few positive conclusions is not in itself a fault. That there are many possible answers provided is a sterling quality. It is a delightful book.

J. Estill Jones

John's Witness to Jesus. By George Appleton. New York: Association Press, 1955. 96 pages. \$1.25.

Much material has been made available for the understanding of the Gospel of John, but it is usually not accessible to the beginner

in Bible study. This small volume gives the results of modern scholarship in a manner as simple as possible. The work is so well done that even the mature student will find new facets of understanding in this helpful volume.

Dale Moody

The Epistle to the Romans. By A. M. Hunter. London: S. C. M. Press, 1955. 134 pages. \$2.00.

There is a concentratedness about all the Torch Bible Commentaries which makes them useful aides to the busy pastor or student. There is a simplicity and eclectic quality about the work of Professor Hunter of Aberdeen which makes it particularly attractive to the same group. Hence, here is a combination formidable to the ignorance of many about Paul's greatest epistle. An attractive format, a useful outline and an excellent paraphrase make this small commentary a "book bargain."

J. Estill Jones

Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History. By Adolf Deissmann. Translated by William E. Wilson. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. \$1.45.

Deissmann's *Paul* is one of the great books on the Apostle. One becomes intensely aware of this fact on rereading the book, for again and again one comes across ideas and material which has infiltrated almost all the more recent literature. And yet the book is not really out of date for there is an undimmed freshness about the presentation of this great figure of the past.

Everyone who has ransacked the used book stores in search of a copy or who has been forced to use a library copy of this book will be grateful that it is once again available in the Harper Torchbooks series of reprints.

Heber F. Peacock

A Critical Introduction to the Gospels. By H. A. Guy. London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1955. 152 pages. \$2.00.

Three attractive features characterize this brief work: (1) Its brevity. It is an introduction to Gospel criticism and may be profitably used by students as a review of the major interests of such criticism. (2) Its apology. The first chapter is an excellent concise presentation of the objectives which such criticism seeks to achieve. The final chapter reminds the reader that this is not all there is to the study of the Gospels. (3) Its fairness. When it is proper, several views are presented with enough references to the Gospels themselves for the reader to study objectively the primary sources.

J. Estill Jones

Jesus and His People. By Paul Minear. New York: Association Press, 1956. 93 pages. \$1.25.

By a series of well-written essays Professor Minear has discussed the relationship between Jesus and his people. Some of the chapter headings in themselves reveal this relationship: "God's People," "God's Temple," "One Flock, One Shepherd," and "The One New Man." His frequent and accurate New Testament references, in addition to an attractive popular style, make this brief work usable by both congregation and pastor. It is a book about the church without many of the modern ecclesiastical cliches and professes to be "ecumenical in its origins as well as in its motivation."

J. Estill Jones

A New Testament Word Book. By William Barclay. London: S. C. M. Press, Ltd., 1956. 128 pages. 7/6.

Thirty-seven words from the New Testament are illuminated from classical Greek, the Septuagint and the Papyri. Included are *Apechein* (payment in full), *Hupomone* (the manly virtue), and *Parousia* (the arrival of the king). Designed specifically for readers who have little or no knowledge of Greek. The short studies will also prove refreshing to the student of Greek.

J. Estill Jones

Human Relations in Educational Organization by James Monroe Hughes. Harper Brothers: New York, 1957. 425 pages. \$4.50.

Designed as a basic text in personnel administration in educational organization, this book will prove quite helpful also to the pastor, minister of education, and other staff members in the churches.

It will help the administrators, staff, and teachers in any educational organization to understand the human relations aspects of their work and to become familiar with the basic principles of organization and operation of an educational organization.

Allen W. Graves

Reading the Bible Today. By Daniel T. Niles. New York: Association Press, 1955. 88 pages. \$1.25.

People today find the world and the language of the Bible so strange that it is difficult at times to read the Bible with understanding. This is true even in countries that have a Christian civilization and even more true in the mission fields. Out of thorough study and much experience the author attempts to give a perspective that will help the modern reader approach the Bible with some understanding. He has succeeded in giving it perspective, but the beginner will need background to appreciate this approach.

Dale Moody

The Lord From Heaven. By Sir Robert Anderson. Wheaton, Illinois: Van Kampen Press, No Date. 118 pages. \$1.50.

Several years ago this book was widely read for the information which was collected from passages in the New Testament which testify to the deity of Jesus Christ. The author was a caustic critic of all modern biblical criticism and his conclusions have been cherished by the most conservative Christians. The present reprint makes it available again for those concerned with this approach to the person of our Lord.

Dale Moody

The Influence of Greek Ideas on Christianity. By Edwin Hatch. Foreword by Frederick C. Grant. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. \$1.45.

This is an old book (Hibbert Lectures, 1888) which has not outlived its usefulness. It has been made even more useful to the modern reader by the addition of a foreword, new notes, and a bibliography by Frederick C. Grant.

The book will continue to be valued for the light it throws on 19th century theological thought, its continuingly valid contribution to the subject, and its contribution to research methodology. It belongs indeed to a "select group of classic works of pure learning."

Heber F. Peacock

The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought. By John Baillie. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956. 151 pages. \$3.00.

In many ways the theology of John Baillie reflects the transition in theology in the twentieth century. The road from his early book on the roots of religion in the human soul to *The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought* is one of the most instructive pilgrimages in modern theology, and one is left with the distinct impression of Baillie's balance. Steering clear of such radical antitheses, so common in much continental and American theology, Baillie is able to relate religion and revelation, man and God in a most impressive manner. His procedure is clearly stated at the outset: "What I have in mind to do is to define as precisely as possible the position which has now emerged, and I shall do it very largely by means of a study of the more recent contributions to the subject, attempting to discriminate between them where they conflict, and pulling together as much of them as appears acceptable" (p. 3). After a survey of the revolt of modern theology against the propositional revelation of Protestant rationalism the author presents the perspective of a "divine self disclosure" (ch. 2), a splendid summary of the relation between I and Thou and truths and images in God's disclosure of himself to man. The content of revelation (ch. 3) manages to relate the ideas of ultimate concern (Tillich), the *kerygma* (C. H. Dodd) and the

parousia (Brunner). This is followed by a chapter which elaborates the idea of historical revelation in contemporary theology. In some ways the most satisfactory discussion is the chapter on "The Response to Revelation" (ch. 5) in which Baillie avoids the extremes of both propositional and personal revelation and preserves the values of each. There are statements in the book which will not altogether please the conservative thinkers who reject the use of the term myth and content for Biblical inerrancy in every detail, but this should not blind the reader to the strong Biblical emphasis of the author. These are only minor details in the volume, and every serious student will profit from this survey of the problems and personalities associated with the central topic of theological discussion in the twentieth century. The discussion of "The Noachic Covenant" in the chapter on "Scripture and Covenant" (ch. 6) goes far enough in the right direction with the problem of general revelation to create a desire for more. The book closes with a moving personal appeal for us to listen and obey. It is healthy to read such disarming honesty as the following: "It will perhaps cause no surprise if I confess that in the case of such an one as myself, who have published books, one of the things that prevents me from listening to the truth is my reluctance to revise opinions to which I have already committed myself in print" (p. 143). Then again: "We are never such eloquent orators as when we are telling ourselves why we should not do the things we do not want to do" (p. 144). The soul of a saint is seen in these closing words: "The clouds and thick darkness remain, and the light piercing them sometimes seems scant enough. But it is the light of the world. It is more light than we are ever likely to use. It is enough to see to do our work by, and until we have done our work we have no cause to repine. When our work is done, it is promised that we shall know even as we are known, and that we shall see face to face."

Dale Moody

Grundlagen der Dogmatik. By Otto Weber. Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, 1955. Volume I, 708 pages. DM 28.50.

Systematic theologies, large and small, have been pouring from the presses for the past 12 years. Extensive works of Barth, Brunner, and Berkouwer, stand over against a whole shelf of brief surveys, but the number of works in between are few in English. In Germany this has not been true. The works of Althaus and Vogel are splendid presentations of Lutheran Theology, and now Reformed theology finds expression in this attractive statement by Otto Weber. The author is already known in English for the Digest of Barth which was translated by A. C. Cochrane (Westminster, 1953). This previous contribution would lead one to suspect a briefer Barth in Weber and in part this expectation is not in vain.

The first two parts introduce the problem and necessity of Christian doctrine, the relation between dogma and dogmatics, the

task of dogmatics, and the history of dogmatics. Those who loudly quack about Christians needing "only the Bible and not theology" need to ponder these pages to discover that they are saying that mature understanding and consistent thinking are not needed. The distinction between confessions and dogma is also a solid statement of the necessity of both. The task of dogmatics relates systematic theology to both science and ethics. The treatment of the history of doctrine is a small volume of great value in itself. Any teacher knows how difficult it is to teach systematic theology to those who have a yawning chasm between the apostles and the present. From the New Testament *kerygma* to Karl Barth and Rudolph Bultmann, Weber presents a masterpiece of condensation.

The third part is given to the doctrine of revelation, and here the Barthian approach begins to bud. Revelation is the self-disclosure of God and out of this all valid human reflection about God grows. And this is more than an echo of Barth. The discussion improves Barth in at least three ways. The Word of God as event, witness, and proclamation is more satisfactory than Barth's idea of the revealed, written, and proclaimed Word of God. Then the seriousness with which Weber gives himself to the arguments for the existence of God is more like Brunner than Barth. The third point meets orthodoxy on its own ground in facing the question of the authority, inspiration, canonicity, and interpretation of the Scriptures. Here again in a little over one hundred pages the author sheds light in all directions. One almost concludes that he is reading the most lucid statement of Reformed theology since Calvin.

In the fourth part the Barthianism begins to bloom. This is especially true in the place given to the doctrine of the Trinity. The very *arche* of Christian doctrine of God is the Trinity. This pre-supposition is combined with the biblical and historical materials. The nature and the attributes of God follow, and they also are a modification of Barth's concepts of freedom and love. The lack of adequate emphasis on the holiness of God is most evident. Great values are gleaned here, but we think at two points we must remain to argue: (1) The Trinity is the apex and not the *arche* of the Christian doctrine, and (2) God is not only free love but holy love.

The rest of this volume (parts five and six) discusses the creation and man. God is creator and his providence over creation relate Barth's doctrine of creation to the teachings of the older orthodoxy. The theological anthropology pre-supposes the Calvinistic conviction that the knowledge of God is necessary for any valid understanding of man, and the image of God in man is grounded in both creation and redemption. Approaching the knowledge of sin also with the pre-supposition of the knowledge of God, the treatment of sin as deed (*Tat*) and death (*Tod*) is superb. There are many points for creative conversation and perhaps some conflict, but this is the best volume on the first part of systematic theology we know. If the second half maintains this standard, a translation into English is imperative.

Dale Moody

The Return of Jesus Christ. By Rene Pache. Translated by William Sanford LaSor. Chicago: Moody Press, 1955. 448 pages. \$4.95.

A few years ago modern millennialism seemed to be confined to American Christianity, but it has now spread into almost every nation where Christianity has roots. The present volume indicates the growing importance of this movement in French-speaking Europe. The author is Principal of the Emmaus Bible School at Lausanne, Switzerland. The views expressed in this book are about the same as those found in the Scofield Reference Bible which, of course, root back to the work of J. N. Dardy about the middle of the last century. It is difficult to discover a major contribution in the book, but it is of value as a report on this type of thought among those who speak the French language. The translator has found it necessary to make numerous notes about the exposition of scripture. The most interesting note is that which pertains to the rapture of the church. The translator finds the interpretation of the author full of difficulties on this subject. Does this mean that LaSor has been led astray from the dogmas of Dispensationalism by his colleague, George Ladd?

Dale Moody

This Life and the Next. By P. T. Forsyth. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1948. 111 pages. \$2.00.

The present interest in the theology of P. T. Forsyth has led to the reprinting of most of his works. This small volume is a reflection on immortality which the author defines as unity with God in this life and in the next. This merges the idea of eternal life with that of immortality. There is much here of value but the British bias for universalism is not persuasive.

Dale Moody

Yale and the Ministry. A History of Education for the Christian Ministry at Yale from the Founding in 1701. By Roland H. Bainton. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. 279 pages. \$5.00.

Anyone interested in Yale, the Christian ministry, or American history, should find this book extremely interesting. Professor Bainton, himself a Yale trained minister, has told his story with great accuracy in sparkling narration. The story is focused upon Yale University's education of men for the ministry but the story has much wider dimensions. Actually, it is the history of the formative impact of a great university upon American religion and culture as it has been made through the leadership of the churches.

The narration begins with the founding of Yale in 1701 when instruction of youth was begun that they might be "the better fitted for publick Employment both in Church and in Civil State." At the outset the liberal arts education which was offered by the University was considered sufficient for church leadership. Soon, however, the young graduates were serving apprentices under the direction of

outstanding local ministers. Later graduates returned for a year or more of formal instruction and in 1822 the Divinity School was organized into a professional school along with the medical and law schools.

Theology, piety, and social reform are the three threads which appear again and again in the recitation of the chronical. It seems that at Yale thorough theological learning, deep devotion, and compassionate concern for fellow man have always been held together, and thus their union may be said to be the most distinctive factor in ministerial training there. These threads are so skillfully traced by Professor Bainton that the reader is instructed in such important topics as New England Theology, revivalism in Connecticut, the theology of Nathaniel W. Taylor, religion in the anti-slavery movement, the educational ideas of Horace Bushnell, and Christianity and America's wars, without seeming to struggle with subtle ideas and difficult history.

In the Twentieth Century, Yale's training of the ministry was greatly broadened. In the first place, it came to be focused not primarily upon training men for Congregational pulpits in New England but upon training the most promising of ministerial candidates for all of the denominations in the United States. Furthermore, it developed a graduate program of studies beyond the professional level and in its Department of Religion in the Graduate School have been trained many of the outstanding scholars and teachers of religion in America.

This book is so admirably written that one is left with hardly any constructive criticism. One complaint that I would make, however, is the slight attention that is given to the last few decades. This is easily excused, however, because the enduring values of recent events are not easily assessed, and also because Mr. Bainton is understandably reluctant to evaluate the contributions of a faculty of which he himself is an outstanding member.

Guy H. Ranson

The Revolt of Martin Luther. By Robert Herndon Fife. New York: Columbia University Press, 1957. 726 pages. \$9.75.

Dr. Fife, professor emeritus of Germanic Languages and Literature at Columbia University, has produced a work destined to remain a monument to the great reformer of Germany. The story of Luther's revolt is not movingly told, but it is carefully and authoritatively explained. The bibliographical helps of this work are all that one could desire. Fife is comfortably at home, not only in early sixteenth century literature on the subject, but also in secondary materials, including the prolific contemporary research in the evangelical reformation. After a "comparatively" brief treatment of Luther's life to A. D. 1517, Fife gives primary attention (pages 245 to 691) to the critical events between the indulgence controversy and the Diet of Worms.

Hugh Wamble

The Early Christian Fathers. Edited and translated by Henry Bettenson. London: Oxford University Press, 1956. 424 pages. \$4.00.

Henry Bettenson, the editor of *Documents of the Christian Church*, has again put scholarship in his debt by providing this manual of excerpts from early Christian writings. Unlike *Documents* which is organized topically, this selection is organized by writers: Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Didache, Epistle to Diognetus, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, and Athanasius. However, under each writer the material is organized topically—including God, Man, Incarnation, Trinity, Church, Ministry, Sacraments, Eschatology, etc. Notes, appendix, and index are useful.

Hugh Wamble

Die Verkuendigung des Reiches Gottes in der Kirche Jesu Christi. Band III: Von Bernhard von Clairvaux bis zu Girolamo Savonarola. By Ernst Staehelin. Basel: Verlag Friedrich Reinhardt AG., 1955. 548 pages.

With the third volume of his, *The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God in the Church of Jesus Christ*, Professor Staehelin carries his compilation of sources into the high and late Middle Ages. One final volume will complete this magnificent work. It has become a veritable treasure-trove for studies in general church history, history of doctrine, the Christian life, "spirituality," and ethics.

The great voices of monasticism are here: Bernard, Francis, Dominic; — great theologians: Lombard, Thomas, Bonaventure; — great mystics: Hildegard of Bingen, Joachim of Fiore; — great ecclesiastical and moral reformers; Wyclif, Hus, Savonarola; — the problems of church and state: Dante, Marsilius of Padua, Ockham; — and a host of others: popes, Kaisers, poets, etc., etc.

The literary selections are translated into good German from the sources, and are arranged historically in three periods. When the final volume is completed, the whole Christian tradition in history will speak with a representative voice.

Theological and historical teachers will be turning to this work again and again, as the most adequate source-book of its kind in any language. The reviewer can only reiterate something from his notice of an earlier volume: I only wish that such a work existed in English.

T. D. Price

The Library of Christian Classics. Volume IX: Early Medieval Theology. Translated and edited by George E. McCracken, in collaboration with Allen Cabaniss. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957. 430 pages. \$5.00.

The Library of Christian Classics is "a series designed to present in the English language, and in twenty-six volumes of convenient size, a selection of the most indispensable Christian treatises written

before the end of the sixteenth century." Sixteen volumes altogether have now been published.

The latest one to appear, Vol. IX, has many useful and interesting selections. In subject-matter, it ranges across the whole field of theological and ecclesiastical concern. The selections are grouped under the four heads of: The Nature of Divine Truth, God's Word in Holy Scripture, the Voice of the Preacher, and Ideals of the Priesthood. These treatises were written between A. D. 400-1100, and selections of them are taken, among others, from Vincent of Lerins, Paschasius Radbertus, Ratramnus, Gregory the Great, Alcuin of York, Rupert of Deutz, Rabanus Maurus, Ivo of Chartres, Theodulph of Orleans, and the Venerable Bede. No two editors, from so vast a range of possible choice, would have picked identical entries — But this one is as good as any other, and the volume is very valuable.

The editors are indeed capable men. The translations are excellent; there are good notes, bibliographies, and indexes. A worthy addition to a splendid series.

T. D. Price

Revivalism and Social Reform. By Timothy L. Smith. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957, 248 pages. \$4.00.

The author's purpose is to show that revival measures and perfectionistic aspiration which flourished between 1840 and 1865 in all the major denominations in America played a significant role in social reform. Here the author has made a contribution. Previous studies have tended to emphasize the material and social factors and to neglect spiritual factors in American social reform. These factors in the development of American social Christianity the author does not overlook. However, he is primarily concerned with the contribution of religion to the rise of the social gospel movement in America.

While most historians have assumed that revivalism declined after 1842 and ceased to have any influence upon social reform, Dr. Smith has discovered that revivalism and the doctrine of holiness played an increasingly important role in the program of the churches after 1842.

Smith contends that evangelists of this period paved the way for the attack on slavery, poverty, and other social issues. Religion was characterized not by a mere quest for perfection but also an interest in the poor, the sinners, and the revival of the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, all of which combined to make Protestantism a social force previous to the conflict over slavery.

Dr. Smith has accomplished a scholarly piece of work. The book's fourteen chapters are profusely footnoted. A critical essay on the sources of information appears in a section in the back of the book. John R. Bodo in his *The Protestant Clergy in Public Issues, 1812-1848*, Charles Howard Hopkins in his *The Rise of the Social Gospel*

in *American Protestantism, 1865-1915*, and James Dombrowski in his *The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America* have emphasized the social forces in the rise of American social Christianity. Paul Carter in his *Decline and Rise of the Social Gospel from 1920-1940* pushes this study of American social Christianity into the forties. This volume fills out the picture with its emphasis upon the specifically religious factors in American social reform.

Henlee H. Barnette

The Religious Press in the South Atlantic States, 1802-1865 by Henry Smith Stroupe. Duke University Press: Durham, North Carolina, 1956. 172 pages. \$4.50.

Those interested in American church history and in religious journalism will be particularly interested in this brief volume. After a 35 page historical introduction tracing the rise of the early religious periodicals on through to 1865, there follows an annotated bibliography listing by title all of the religious newspapers and magazines published in the south atlantic states from 1802-1865. Under each heading there is given basic information about the publication, its editors, its size and circulation, and a brief historical note tracing its history.

Allen W. Graves

The Sword and the Cross. By Robert M. Grant. New York: Macmillan Company, 1955. 144 pages. \$2.75.

This is a history of the clash between early Christianity and the Roman Empire. The work is done in a popular readable style, but it sacrifices nothing of scholarship. The reader is not only acquainted with the real issues between Christianity and the Roman Empire, but he is introduced to the nature of the inevitable conflict between Christianity and the demands of political life. Both ministers and laymen will profit greatly from a careful study of this book.

Guy H. Ranson

The Kingdom Beyond Caste. By Liston Pope. New York: Friendship Press, 1957. 170 pages. Cloth, \$3.00; paper, \$1.25.

This is a popularly written but learned study of race relations with particular attention to the status of the Negro in the United States. Perhaps no person among us is as admirably equipped to speak on this subject as Dean Pope. By reasons of birth, rearing, education, and early ministry in North Carolina, Dr. Pope acquired first hand information of the complexities of race relations in the South. Then for a number of years he was engaged in study, research

and teaching in social ethics in Yale University. Since becoming Dean of Yale Divinity school, he has traveled widely throughout the world and has gained first hand information concerning the feelings, teaching, and opportunities of the Christian churches concerning race relations. In this book he gives us the opportunity to profit from his varied experiences.

Guy H. Ranson

American Churches and the Negro. By W. D. Weatherford. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1957. 310 pages. \$3.50.

This book has been published at a propitious time. While many church leaders have rejoiced over the desegregation opinions of the Supreme Court of May 17, 1954, and later, they have been grieved that little progress is being made toward integration of the churches. In this book, Dr. Weatherford furnishes both information and suggestions toward a new integration of the churches. He traces the history by denominations of the integrated churches during slavery to the segregated churches of the present. His thesis is that since whites and Negroes worshipped together for many years during slavery while maintaining a spirit of Christian unity, they can do so again. The work should be given careful study by all American Christians as an aid for the healing of the rended Body of Christ. However, a real limitation of the book must be noted. This is a tendency to minimize the fact that Negroes were subordinated in the churches during slavery and that they would not now accept such a position. In order to reunite white and Negro Christians in the churches, it would be necessary to establish complete equality and mutuality among them. If this were done, we would go far beyond the situation during slavery. While Dr. Weatherford's book is most useful in many respects, it minimizes rather than comes to grips with this fundamental necessity.

Guy H. Ranson

John Wesley. By Francis J. McConnell. New York: Abingdon Press, 1939. 355 pages. \$3.00.

This is another timely book in the renaissance of Methodist scholarship. The late Bishop McConnell has told the fascinating story of John Wesley, but there are embellishments which only the pulpit can produce. The life of Wesley is treated in ten chapters, and the chapters which deal with Wesley's conversion, early preaching, controversies, and perfectionism are superb. The longest and seemingly central chapter deals with the social consequences of Wesley's evangelical work.

Hugh Wamble

The Southern Frontier, 1670-1732. By Verner W. Crane. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1956. 359 pages. \$1.45.

Copyrighted in 1929 and now issued in paper-back edition, this is the standard work on the early establishment of English colonies in the area including North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and the Southwest. Little attention is given to religion, but the significance of economics, international politics, Indian affairs, etc., is carefully defined and demonstrated.

Hugh Wamble

The Story of Kathleen Mallory. By Annie Wright Ussery. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1956. 199 pages. \$2.50.

For thirty-six years "Miss Mallory," as she was familiarly and affectionately called, was the very embodiment of Woman's Missionary Union. Her missionary passion, her organizing ability, and her winsome personality combined to make her the effective leader of thousands of Southern Baptist women in their earnest endeavor to share the Gospel with the whole world. From her election in 1912 until her retirement as Executive Secretary of W.M.U. in 1948 she saw remarkable growth in the missionary education of women and young people, visibly evidenced by phenomenal increase in missionary giving, especially through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

The story of this noble woman has been well told by one who knew her intimately through family connections. Not only the record of achievements, but the human side of her life is recorded. For the first time many will learn why such a dainty, feminine, attractive person remained unmarried, as the tragic story of the death of her fiance is read. Those who knew her methodical ways will smile as little eccentricities are described. It is a warm and moving picture of a dedicated and lovable person.

H. C. Goerner

Where To Go For Help. By Wayne E. Oates. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957. 115 pages. \$2.00.

Every pastor, teacher, counsellor knows that needy people sometimes do not know where to go for help. This volume is written by an expert in the area of counselling and is a handbook for people who want to know where to go for help. The book is divided into two main sections. Part One has to do with the great helping professions and their literature. A clear analysis of the Christian ministry, the medical profession, the legal profession, the teaching profession, the social work profession is presented along with guiding principles in the selection of a trustworthy counsellor and of helpful literature.

Part Two deals with help on special problems. Among these are

premarital guidance, marriage tensions, sexual difficulties, birth control, sterility, unwed parents, adopting children, problem children, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, the problem drinker, the aged, and mental illness. At the conclusion of each one of these chapters there is a list of further recommended readings and institutions which care for people in trouble.

This helpful volume has a devotional quality which reflects the spirit of the author. Pastors, teachers, counsellors, laymen will find this practical volume to be indispensable in referring others to reliable individuals, agencies, and books which can most adequately meet their needs.

Henlee H. Barnette

The Minister and Christian Nurture. By Nathaniel F. Forsyth, Editor. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957. 250 pages. \$3.50.

There has long been needed a serious book that would help ministers see their relation to Christian education. Too often ministers have had little interest in and thus had little concern for Christian education. They left this major area in the life and work of the church to volunteer, lay leadership. This book is not an apologetic nor does it make a plea for ministers to give more time to Christian education in their churches. In a straightforward manner the writers simply point out the inevitable and inescapable relationship of the minister to this important area.

The book is a symposium written by ten men who in general are specialists in the particular field in which they write. Chapter headings include, "The Churches Expect a Teaching Ministry," "The Minister As Teacher," "Christianity Is Learned In A Democratic Church," "Freedom To Teach and Preach." Particularly helpful are the two chapters, "Christianity Is Learned at Home," and "Christianity Is Learned Through Living Encounter With the Bible." The treatment is both scholarly and practical. The minister will find stimulation and challenge in reading this book.

Findley B. Edge

The Coming World Civilization. By William Ernest Hocking. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956. 210 pages. \$3.75.

The Inevitable Choice. By Edmund Davison Soper. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1957. 192 pages. \$2.50.

These two books are here listed together, not because they are alike, but because they are different. Although they deal with the same general theme, two more radically different approaches and conclusions could hardly be found.

The question is, What is and ought to be the future of religion in the world? Hocking's answer is, The great religions of the world are and ought to be basically one. They are "already fused together, so

to speak, at the top" (p. 149). This inherent unity should be recognized and expressed in empirical forms.

Soper raises the question, Are all religions alike?, and answers with a strong and positive negative. He finds in Hinduism, specifically the Vedanta philosophy, the most dangerous rival to Christianity. This is precisely because Vedantism agrees with Hocking concerning the basic mystical unity of all religions. Soper warns that we must choose between genuine Christian faith and this subtle philosophy to tolerance which blurs distinctions and reduces everything to a meaningless common denominator.

Read Hocking's book. It is a good analysis of certain trends in our world. But don't read Hocking without going on to Soper. You will need the antidote.

H. C. Goerner

Of Men and Angels. By Wesley Shrader. New York: Rinehart and Company, 1957. 184 pages. \$2.95.

In this book Dr. Shrader recounts some eighteen different types of counseling situations. The author, now associate professor of practical theology in Yale University, tells of these selected experiences from his twenty years as a Baptist pastor in Kentucky and Virginia. Any pastor who is interested in rendering help to the troubled people of his community will profit greatly by reading this book. The counseling here is based upon the Christian faith and at the same time it takes advantage of the contributions of modern psychology. Laymen who read this book will be made more sympathetic with this aspect of the varied activities of their pastors.

Guy H. Ranson

Christianity and World Issues. By T. B. Maston. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957. 375 pages. \$5.00.

This work is written primarily as a textbook in Christian social ethics and it is a worthy addition to this area of study and concern. The author is admirably suited for his task, having taught the subject for many years in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary after having received excellent training for his vocation.

The work begins with a splendid discussion of the relation of the church and the world. Various interpretations of the "world" and the attitude of the church to it are set forth objectively, and then the author indicates his own understanding and the bases of his judgment. As should be expected of one who writes a book with the title of this one, Dr. Maston indicates clearly that he understands that the gospel of Christ is concerned for this world. This gospel is the only ground for the transformation of earth because it is two-dimensional: it is both for time and for eternity.

Chapters Two to Ten deal with the Christian concern for the

individual, the family, racial problems, economic life, communism, church and state relations, and the problems of war and peace. Various interpretations in each instance are set forth so that the reader may understand both the advantages and the limitations of the various approaches to the problems. In each area of concern, Professor Maston argues for the point of view which he believes to be necessitated by the Bible and the witness of the church through the centuries.

The last two chapters of the book are concerned with the nature of the crisis in the world and the way in which Christianity is prepared to seek the transformation of this world. Here Dr. Maston indicates clearly that perfection of this earthly life is not to be expected. However, he firmly and persuasively insists that in the midst of evil we must seek good even though we be crucified.

Perhaps two of the primary characterizations of the books can be singled out for special notice. First, the book is written in readable and non-technical language and the issues are very simply and clearly set forth. This certainly is a strong point. But it seems to me that in seeking to make a complete manual of social ethics, the author has sacrificed something of the creative effort of which he is capable. Second, the work is grounded in the Bible and every issue is faced from the demands of life that is redeemed by Christ in all of its relationships. This, too, is admirable, but again I think that the author has made too great an effort at objectivity and, therefore, has sacrificed something of sharply distinguished biblical and non-biblical points of view. The work must be commended highly both to people in church vocations and to lay people who have any real interest in understanding the full dimensions of the faith which they profess.

Guy H. Ranson

Marsilius of Padua. Volume I: Marsilius of Padua and Medieval Political Philosophy. By Alan Gewirth. New York: Columbia University Press, 1951. 342 pages. \$4.75. **Volume II: The Defensor Pacis.** Translated with an introduction by Alan Gewirth. *Ibid.*, 1956. 450 pages. \$8.50. Number XLVI of the Columbia Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies.

This is the first really detailed study of Marsilius in English and the first complete translation of his monumental work into any modern language. Partial translations only have been made including one into English in 1535. The great importance of these two volumes is due to the fact that Marsilius was one of the truly revolutionary writers in the history of political thought with particular bearing upon the relation of church and state. His ideas are in the background of the formation of modern national states in the West particularly concerning the relation of church and state in modern democracies.

Volume One is Professor Gewirth's description and interpretation of Marsilius in his relation to the medieval world with which he was involved and something of his influence upon the modern world

which he helped to produce. Volume Two is Marsilius' *Defender of Peace* translated into English with the necessary helps for its study. The work was first written in 1324 and was condemned by the Pope in 1326. Marsilius was rector of the University of Paris in 1313 during its ascendancy and was given a haven by Ludwig of Bavaria after his disfavor. He was thus avidly studied by his contemporaries and immediate successors who were opposed to the papal power. Through them, the work then was carried over to the political philosophers who developed the foundations for modern democratic states.

Marsilius maintains popular sovereignty against papal power in both church and state. He contends that the purpose of the state is to gain security for the populace as a whole. The citizenry is made secure when it has control over property and the coercive power. The state is based, therefore, not upon ultimate goals or values but upon immediate goals and values which are natural to all men. Secular authority need not be established by the ecclesiastical as the medieval church maintained, because the state is essential to man's well being and as such needs be dependent upon nothing save itself. Let the church, therefore, concern itself primarily with the realm of eternal salvation and where it deals with temporal affairs, let it be a means of reinforcing the function of the state. Even in the church the papal power is invalid because in the New Testament bishops and presbyters are the same and not one of them is superior to any other. Episcopal power, therefore, is a human invention and in the church as in the state there is to be popular sovereignty. In the end, Marsilius equates natural and divine values in the two institutions.

Professor Gewirth not only writes a brilliant interpretation of Marsilius and his place in history and modern political and religious thought, but he is aware of the problems that are raised for political scientists and theologians whether these are faced by Marsilius or not. He sees, for example, as Marsilius does not, that Marsilius is oriented primarily in classical Greek and Renaissance secular values which cannot be equated with the biblical understanding of the good for man. However, Gewirth himself does not appear to see the radical antithesis that exists between the two and that the Christian must insist upon the latter. To accept this latter position is to reject natural values as determinative of the life both of church and state, and affirm that these two institutions are actualized only as they serve the purpose of God in them.

Guy H. Ranson

Varieties of Experience: An Introduction to Philosophy. By Albert William Levi. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957. 525 pages. \$5.75.

This is an excellent introduction to the fields and problems of philosophy by an associate professor of philosophy in Washington University. The method of presentation is admirable, combining

source material from the great philosophers of the western world and discourses by the author. There are nine divisions, each constituting a chapter beginning with the nature of philosophy and following through ways of knowing, matter and life, mind and the cosmos, individual decision, social living, the arts, history, and concluding with religion. Throughout the author attempts to be objective, simply introducing the beginning student to the problems without attempting to answer them for him. Both the opportunity and the responsibility for final decisions are left to the mind and will of the reader. Anyone who is interested in understanding what philosophy is about and knowing of the various approaches to the understanding of the problems which are involved in this important human enterprise will profit greatly from a study of this work.

Guy H. Ranson

The Christian as Citizen. By John C. Bennett. New York: Association Press, 1955. 93 pages. \$1.25.

This little book is a brilliant analysis of the social and political responsibility of the Christian in the modern world and a plea for him to accept his role. Dr. Bennet is professor of Christian theology and ethics and dean of the faculty in Union Seminary in New York City. He is admirably fitted to deal with the topic here under consideration which he does with clarity and urgency.

Guy H. Ranson

The Road to Inner Freedom: The Ethics. By Baruch Spinoza. Edited with an introduction by Dagobert D. Runes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1957. 215 pages. \$3.00.

This is a new edition of Spinoza's *Ethics*. This is one of the primary works of the famous Jewish philosopher of Holland. The work, of course, contains much more than what would be expected of a treatise on morality. Actually it deals with the nature of man and his relationship to God and his obligations to himself and to God. This edition will prove helpful to anyone who is seeking to understand Spinoza because it makes available his great work in a single volume.

Guy H. Ranson

Speak Truth to Power. A study of international conflict prepared for the American Friends Service Committee. 144 East Twentieth Street, New York 3, New York. 71 pages. \$0.25.

This little pamphlet sets forth in clear and provocative language a Quaker understanding of the Christian alternative to violence and war. It is worthy of careful study.

Guy H. Ranson

Work and Contemplation. By Douglas V. Steere. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. 148 pages. \$2.50.

These five lectures on the Rauschenbusch Foundation in Colgate-Rochester Divinity School by the professor of philosophy in Haverford College constitute a worthy addition to the growing literature in the Christian doctrine of vocation. The discussions of the Christian understanding of work and of contemplation and of their relationship in Christian history and modern industrial society are delightfully written and are inspiring to read. Perhaps the most distinctive note of Professor Steere is his emphasis upon joy rather than duty in the Christian's response to the summons of God in work. Work is here viewed as a worshipful response to God such that there is mystical union with the creator redeemer God in divine work.

The author has produced a volume that is fascinating to read by his sparkling style of writing and by the use of interesting yet appropriate illustrative materials. However, he has sacrificed a good deal in analysis, criticism, and systematic construction.

Guy H. Ranson

Christian Personal Ethics. By Carl F. H. Henry. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957. 583 pages. \$6.95.

We have waited a long time for this conservative and comprehensive study of Christian morality. Most conservative approaches have been too narrow in scope and too much concerned with minor ethical issues. Dr. Henry, professor of Theology and Christian Philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary and editor of *Christianity Today*, is thoroughly familiar with speculative moral philosophy as well as with Christian ethics. He gives a clear and fair analysis of philosophical ethics and then proceeds to show the distinctiveness of Christian ethics. He rightly emphasizes the fact that Christian ethics is rooted and grounded in revelation while philosophical ethics is based upon reason and nature.

Dr. Henry examines practically every leading Christian ethicist's point of view and proceeds to point out his strength and weakness. He makes Christ the ultimate criterion of all human conduct. A whole chapter is devoted to the Holy Spirit as the Christian ethical dynamic. In this study he lays emphasis upon a much-neglected aspect of Christian morality, namely, the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian conduct.

The book also has its limitations. It draws too rigid a line between "personal" and "social" ethics. However, he indicates that another book on Social Ethics is necessary to supplement this one. Again, the volume could have been done in a considerably smaller scope.

While Professor Henry makes a strong case for the Sermon on the Mount as "the final and deepest statement of the law," some will take issue with him at this point. He sees the basic con-

tinuity between the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount. These points of continuity are expressed throughout the Sermon itself. Thus the Sermon provides its own broad contact with the ethical teaching of the Old Testament in Jesus' declaration that He came not to destroy but to fulfill the law and the prophets.

Because of his emphasis upon propositional revelation, the so-called "neo-orthodox" thinkers, and others will not be too happy. But despite all of the arguments contrary to the fact that there are great ethical principles of conduct in the Scriptures, they are there and with the illumination and energizing power of the Holy Spirit they can become trustworthy and dependable guides for life.

In spite of its limitations, I predict that among conservatives *Christian Personal Ethics* will become standard reading. But no matter what one's theological position may be, this volume must be reckoned with in a broad study of Christian ethics. His systematic presentation and clarity of thought and style make this book indispensable for the student of Christian ethics. It is scholarly and comprehensive enough to be academically respectable. Besides a clear statement of the contents of the book, there is an excellent bibliography at the end for further reading.

Henlee H. Barnette

Guide to the Good Life. By William A. Spurrier. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. 243 pages. \$3.50.

According to the author the purpose of this book is to "say something to the Christian layman on the relation of the Christian faith to daily living." To achieve this purpose, he begins with a discussion of what makes life Christian and then proceeds to describe the doctrinal basis of this way of life. The book then is divided into two major sections, personal ethics and social ethics. The problems of personal growth, getting along with other people, vocations, courtship and marriage are analyzed in the area of personal ethics. Under social ethics problems of the state, the economic order, international relations, race relations are discussed. A final chapter is devoted to Christian conversion. He describes conversion as a process beginning with a turning from sin. The next step is the problem of guilt and justification by faith as the Christian answer. Then follows sanctification by the Holy Spirit. This is really the first positive action which leads on into the life of a church. This reviewer holds that the term "salvation" and not "conversion" is the Biblical word which describes this process. Conversion is usually thought of as an initial experience of salvation.

This book is written in language that the layman can understand. It helps to define what is the good life and seeks to guide the individual in achieving it. It is a practical book which should help its readers to make intelligent moral decisions in complex situations.

Henlee H. Barnette

One Marriage Two Faiths: Guidance on Interfaith Marriage. By James H. S. Bossard and Eleanor Stoker Boll. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957. 180 pages. \$3.50.

Professor Bossard needs no introduction to the sociological world. He is the author of numerous works in this field and his co-author in this book has worked closely with him for a number of years. The purpose of this volume is to answer the innumerable questions and problems of men and women who are puzzled about interfaith marriages. The answers to these questions are based upon case histories for a quarter of a century or more which involves information from parents, relatives, children, and grandchildren as well as from the couples themselves. This methodology, of course, gives an authoritative ring to the whole study.

Few young people contemplating marriage have understood the real meaning of interfaith marriages. Rarely do they stop to think that interfaith marriage involves the union of two distinctive personalities, two differing ways of thinking and living in life's most intimate relationship. These differences manifest themselves in attitudes and actions at every level of experience especially in the patterns of sexual behavior. The authors go on to point out that not only religious differences, but national variations within the religious group, and social class differences can pose real problems in marital adjustment.

As for the prevalence of mixed marriages we have no adequate data. Available sources consist of special restricted studies which, when combined, give us only a relatively reliable answer. These data indicate that marriage across religious lines is large and is increasing in volume.

All persons contemplating interfaith marriage should study carefully chapters 6-8 which deal with the husband-wife, parent-child relationships and solutions which have worked in interfaith marriage adjustments. You young people who are deeply in love feel that they can iron out all of their marital problems by intellectualizing. But if the records of this book are accurate, they indicate "that parental feelings supersede romantic love and individualism" (p 114). When a baby comes both parents feel protective and possessive about it. Both families try to raise the child and as a result he is torn in choosing his religion and philosophy of life between two sides of the family. This results not only in "taking sides" with the family, but in inner conflict for the child. Nor does the matter end here. The divisiveness extends to brothers and sisters as well as parents and tends to divide them into opposing camps. This is the fundamental tragedy of many interfaith marriages.

Professor Bossard is too wise to offer simple and naive solutions to interfaith marriages. But on the basis of case studies he discovered that mixed marriages work out successfully when the following principles are followed: (1) where one of the mates accepts the religious culture of the other; (2) when the couple withdraw from most social contacts and live in relative social isolation; (3)

when each one goes his own way with relative freedom; (4) when couples agree that there shall be no children in their families; (5) when both have a common bond of indifference to the church and what it stands for; (6) when there is a compromise between intelligent persons who both give and take on the issues involved in a mixed marriage. Professor Bossard hastens to add, however, that the above observations gleaned from case histories are used to illustrate, not to indicate finality of judgment.

This book tackles a touchy problem with real insight and frankness. It is based upon the solid facts of sociological research. Ministers, social workers, marriage counselors will find it invaluable in helping young people to wisely choose a mate. The book admirably supplements, from a sociological point of view, the more religious approach to the problem of interfaith marriages by Dr. James A. Pike in his book *If You Marry Outside of Your Faith*.

Henlee H. Barnette

BOOKS RECEIVED

Jesus of Yesterday and Today. By Samuel G. Craig. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company. 186 pages. \$2.75.

Paul, The Tent Maker. By Bertram Day. Boston: Christopher Publishing House. 109 pages. \$2.00.

The Gospel of John. The Gospel of John and The Epistles of John. By Frederick C. Grant. Issues Thirteen and Fourteen in Harper's Annotated Bible Series. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956. 75 pages and 57 pages. \$.95 each.

The Bible and the Human Quest. By Algernon Odell Steele. New York: Philosophical Library, 1956. 240 pages. \$3.75.

Letters to the Seven Churches. By Joseph A. Seiss. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1956. 343 pages. \$2.75.

The Crown. A religious novel. By Robert F. Truesdell. Boston: The Christopher Publishing House, 1956. 298 pages. \$4.00.

I Chose A Parson. By Phyllis Stark. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956. 240 pages.

The Unfolding Drama of the Bible. By Bernhard W. Anderson. New York: Association Press, 1953. 61 pages.

The Living Christ and Dying Heathenism. By John Warneck. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1954. 312 pages. \$3.95. (Re-print of a book published in 1909 by Revell.)

Non-Christian Religions, A Comparative Study. By Ione Lowman. Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, n.d. 123 pages. \$1.75.

Chosen Peoples. By A. Denis Baly. Philadelphia: The Christian Education Press, 1956. 147 pages. \$1.50.

Return to Reality. By W. P. Witcutt. New York: The Macmillan Company, n.d. 62 pages. \$1.75.

From Brahma to Christ. By Lakshmibai Tilak. New York: Association Press, 1956. 93 pages. \$1.25.

East Is East, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity—A Comparison. By Peter Fingesten. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956. 181 pages. \$3.00.

Heritage of the Desert. By Harry B. Ellis. New York: The Ronald Press, 1956. 311 pages. \$5.00.

The Buddha, The Prophet and The Christ. By F. H. Hilliard. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956. 169 pages. \$3.00.

The Cross Is Heaven—The Life and Writings of Sadhu Sundar Singh. Edited by A. J. Appasamy. New York: Association Press, 1957. 93 pages. \$1.25.

World Religions. (A Brief Guide, with Statistics). By Benson Y. Landis. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1957. 158 pages. \$2.95.

Cross and Crisis in Japan. By Charles W. Iglehart. New York: Friendship Press, 1957. 166 pages. \$2.50.

Love of This Land. Edited by James H. Robinson. Philadelphia: The Christian Education Press, 1956. 76 pages. \$1.00.

The Anatomy of Terror. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C., 1956. 73 pages. \$1.00.

Religious Living. By Georgia Harkness. New York: Association Press, 1957. 119 pages. \$.50.

What Makes America Great? By W. Earl Waldrop. St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1957. 96 pages. \$1.50.

Christians Together. By Maurice W. Fogle. St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1957. 160 pages. \$2.75.

The Times Test the Church. By Frederick K. Wentz. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956. 154 pages. \$1.95.

The Church and the Public Conscience. By Edgar M. Carlson. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press. 104 pages. \$1.75.

Politics For Christians. By Willaim Muehl. New York: Association Press, 1956. 180 pages. \$3.00.

The Celebration of Marriage in Canada. By Leo G. Hinz. Ottawa: The University of Ottawa Press, 1957. 166 pages. No price given.

Voices From Heaven and Hell. By J. Marcellus Kik. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1956. 192 pages. \$2.50.

The Gospel of the Spirit. By Samuel Eyles Pierce. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1955. 104 pages. \$1.50.

Converting the Catholic. By Ben Borders. Published by the author, P. O. Box 207, Bransford, Florida, 1957. 96 pages. \$1.50.

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